

# Hell & high water hit Down Under

**MELBOURNE**—Dozens of fast-spreading bushfires, many of them believed to have been set by arsonists, killed countless animals and hundreds of humans who tried to save their homes and animals in drought-strick-



*Kangaroos at Wildhaven before the fires. (Stella Reid)*

en northeastern Victoria state, Australia during the first weekend of February 2009.

Among the first 181 known human fatalities were five prominent animal advocates and two young sisters who tried unsuccessfully to evacuate their horses [see page 18]. More than 200 rural Australians were missing in a burned region larger than Luxembourg, pending searches of rubble that remained smoldering for as long as a week.

The eventual human death toll was expected to exceed 400.

At least 20,000 sheep were killed in two of the first fires of the series. As more fires broke out, public officials and news media found themselves unable to keep estimates of livestock losses current.

Two animal shelters were razed, Wildlife Victoria initially reported, then bumped the number to four. The best known, Wildhaven, operated by Stella and Alan Reid, “was a safe, peaceful paradise for all creatures and especially for kangaroos,” e-mailed Teresa Buss-Carden of Australians for Wildlife, a subcommittee of the World League for Protection of Animals. “Every time I spotted Stella’s e-mails I knew that I was in for a beautiful treat. Her affectionate images of kangaroos, usually embraced by gentle light, always had a soothing effect on my sore soul.”

“A lot of wildlife carers have lost their homes and facilities and in some cases  
*(continued on page 10)*

# Nature’s animal control officers

To fully appreciate coyotes may require getting to know them—not taming them, not trying to interact with them as wild cousins of domestic dogs, just watching and listening.

Long before humans devised Tweeters to let all their friends and family know where they are and what they are doing at every moment, coyotes learned to bark briefly each evening as they emerge from their dens, which they change almost every night, to tell every other coyote within earshot where they will be hunting and scavenging.

Later, if a coyote has the good fortune to come across a food source big enough to share, the coyote will bark and whirl to summon others to dinner. A large rabbit may feed mate and family. A road-killed deer carcass may bring an amplified call to distant cousins.



*Coyote near Dodge City, Kansas. (Mona Lefebvre)*

Soon other coyotes will converge like gray ghosts stealing through the trees. They will exuberantly greet each other, but will only howl again if they feel unobserved. They will eat until the food is gone. Unlike foxes, coyotes do not attempt to store food, especially not something large enough to attract wolves or pumas, who also eat coyotes. Instead, they quickly strip a carcass down to bones, then play for a time before dispersing to find their daytime sleeping places.

Mated coyotes will usually stay together, with their dependent pups. Young adults may pair off at such feasts.

Typically the males slip away from a coyote gathering first. If they sense that any human may be watching, they make themselves conspicuous, then lead the observer as far as possible from the females and young. Sometimes male coyotes will deliberately cross each other’s paths to help confuse pursuit.

Unlike wolves, coyote families seldom fight over territory. Instead, they work out ways to share—and at times relieve tension with a prank, or a contest, such as taking turns daring a chained dog to

*(continued on page 11)*

# ANIMAL PEOPLE

*News For People Who Care*

**March 2009**  
**Volume XIV, #2**

*About Animals*

## Puppy mill raids boost lawmaker interest

The 2009 state legislative sessions in at least six states opened with introductions of proposed anti-puppy mill bills, with many more bill introductions reportedly pending.

Stimulating the legislative activity were some of the biggest dog seizures from alleged puppy mills on record in Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington—all involving small breeds and small mixed breeds, the dogs least often available from shelters and most in demand through pet stores and Internet pet brokerages.



*Rescued pup at the NOAH Center. (NOAH)*

The Everett Animal Shelter, just half an hour by car and ferry boat from the **ANIMAL PEOPLE** offices in the outer Seattle suburbs, on February 9, 2009 took legal custody of nearly 160 dogs who were seized on January 16 in the first of a multi-day series of raids on sites in rural Snohomish and Skagit Counties. The raids netted more than 600 dogs in all, most of them of small breeds and small mixed breeds. Many were pregnant, though humane officers said Internet reports that thousands of puppies were expected were exaggerated.

“The dogs’ former owners failed to meet a deadline to post more than \$72,000 worth of bonds or to petition a court to prevent the dogs’ transfer,” reported Everett *Daily Herald* writer Jackson Holtz.

The Everett Animal Shelter dogs were parceled out to breed rescue groups and foster homes for further care and eventual adoption into homes.

More dogs collected in the northwestern Washington raids filled several other shelters. Seventy-two were bivouacked at the Northwest Organization for Animal Help in Stanwood, doubling the NOAH shelter population—but, in anticipation of disaster relief needs, the shelter was built with an expansive indoor dog gymnasium which can be rapidly transformed into emergency dog runs.

*(continued on page 8)*

## Relief aid reaches animals in Gaza



*Livestock, working animals, and the surviving animals at the Gaza Zoo on January 29, 2009 received food and veterinary supplies donated by ANIMAL PEOPLE readers and the World Society for the Protection of Animals. Thirty truckloads of oats, hay, and medicines reached Gaza after the Israeli charity Let The Animals Live won special authorization for the relief convoy from the Israeli defense ministry. Distribution of the food and supplies in Gaza was coordinated by Imad Atrash of the Palestine Wildlife Society. “This collaboration between us and the Palestinians is proof that the animals are not part of the political conflict,” said Let The Animals Live spokesperson Eti Altman. “I am hoping that through the animals we will be able to draw the two sides closer together.”*

## Can a label make pork “humane”?

**LONDON**—Two pork industry fronts, the British Pig Executive and the National Pig Association, may not advertise that “British pig farms have very high welfare standards, assured by the Quality Standard Mark,” the Advertising Standards Authority ruled on February 11, 2009.

Pending revision of the BPEx and NPA ads, the ruling interrupted a two-year promotion featuring television chef Jamie Oliver. The Advertising Standards Authority passed no judgement as to the value of the Quality Standard Mark used by BPEx and the NPA, but only about a third of the pigs raised in Britain are raised according to the requirements of the program.

Oliver in a January broadcast enti-

tled *Jamie Saves Our Bacon* joined the Royal SPCA in asking the European Union to “set tougher minimum welfare standards for farmers and legislate more honest labelling about how animals are reared,” wrote James Meikle of *The Guardian*. “Britain is only about 25% self-sufficient in bacon and 70% in pork,” Meikle noted, “meaning it imports large quantities of pig meat, which farmers in the U.K. complain comes from animals generally raised in worse and more intensive indoor conditions, including in much of the E.U.”

But RSPCA spokesperson Julia Wrathall told Meikle that “a significant number” of the nine million pigs per year who are raised and slaughtered in the U.K. also “live

*(continued on page 6)*

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Editorial feature

No more treating sentient lives as trash

Horse racing evolved as “The Sport of Kings,” since kings were among the first people who could afford to breed and race highly valued animals kept by others mostly for work.

Animal fighting, regardless of any terms applied to the human participants, by contrast evolved as “The Sport of Trash.”

The plastic garbage bags full of “sexed” male chickens awaiting live maceration at any hatchery serving the egg industry illustrate why. Cockfighting, bullfighting, and dog-fighting each originated through the quest to find profitable uses for lives that would otherwise be snuffed out and discarded: birds who would never lay eggs, cattle who would never give milk, and barge-born mongrel pups who might combine big-dog stamina with small-dog feistiness, but would grow up to be too small to pull carts, too big to hunt rats.

Gambling money and the evolution of paying audiences for animal fighting eventually separated the lineage of most gamecocks, fighting bulls, and fighting dogs from their barnyard and waterfront ancestors, but not entirely. The public participatory forms of bullfighting practiced in India as *jallikattu* and *dhirio*, for example, and the Brazilian version called *farra du boi*, are little changed from ancient origins.

Surplus bull calves in early agrarian societies might be castrated and trained to draw plows and carts, but relatively few were needed for work. Bull calves might also be raised as steers, for beef; but until the advent of mechanized grain production, few people could afford to keep and fatten cattle just to be eaten.

Yet many tried. Around the world, agrarian societies typically tried to feed most of their young and healthy animals through the winter, then culled them at midwinter solstice and spring equinox festivals. The killing was sometimes ritualized as sacrifice, sometimes as sport and entertainment, and often as all three.

The ritual and sadistic aspects of traditional agrarian culling represented two of the most common responses to the psychological stress of slaughtering animals identified by slaughterhouse designer and reformer Temple Grandin in her studies of slaughter workers. The third common response is distancing, associated with abuse of drugs and alcoholic beverages, also commonly associated with public participatory slaughter.

The rise of dogfighting as a way to dispose of surplus animals is recalled in the use of “bait dogs” to train the actual pit dogs. So-called “bait dogs” are typically collected as “adoptions” of free-to-good-home cast-off ex-pets and their unwanted litters.

Gamecock breeding, training, and fighting rarely have any direct connection these days to the culling practices of the poultry trade that they emerged from. Yet cockfighting continues as a virtual shadow of the poultry industry. Pinpointing the locations of cockfighting arrests around the U.S. produces a *de facto* map of factory chicken farming.

Raids on U.S. cockfights and gamecock facilities impounded at least 6,491 birds in 2008, bringing 598 arrests, more than in most recent years, but well below the record 7,995 birds who were impounded and 1,508 people who were arrested in 2001. More than 95% of the arrestees in the past 10 years have been male and of Hispanic surname, almost all of them caught in communities where the poultry industry employs thousands of workers from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean islands. Many of the rest are of Southeast Asian surname, in communities where Southeast Asian immigrants are also prominent among the poultry industry workforce.

Countering the frequent allegation that Hispanic and Southeast Asian immigrants have brought cockfighting with them from their homelands is that the oldest two or three percent of cockfighters tend to be Caucasians, mostly from the Ozarks, Appalachia, and the Carolinas. Some immigrant poultry workers have had prior involvement in cockfighting, but their interest has been encouraged by American “good old boys.” Cultural mingling among cockfighters is nothing new. Governors from Texas and Tennessee were instrumental in reviving cockfighting in Puerto Rico in 1933, after it had been banned for 30 years, as the January/February 2009 **ANIMAL PEOPLE** editorial recounted in detail. Caucasians such as former Tennessee state representative Ronnie Davis continue to lead efforts to undo or weaken the cockfighting bans now back in effect throughout the U.S., 75 years after many of the prohibitions adopted early in the 20th century were quietly dismantled.

But Davis, 64, may be sidelined. As Tom Humphrey of the *Knoxville News*

*Sentinel* recounted on April 10, 2008, he lost the seat he had held for 18 years in 2002 “while under indictment on charges stemming from an alleged scheme to swindle two Texas men. He pleaded guilty in 2004 to federal fraud, extortion and drug charges, and was sentenced to 26 months in prison.”

FBI agent Thomas P. Farrow testified to the Tennessee House Judiciary Committee in April 2008 that after he supervised the arrest of 145 people at two Tennessee cockfights circa 1989, “One pit owner asserted to us that he paid \$30,000 to Ronnie Davis” to “help get that back to a misdemeanor.” Davis in 1990 introduced a bill that did the job.

Responded Davis, to Humphrey, “I’ve got a buddy who raises 150,000 chickens and every seven weeks Tyson comes to get them, hangs them up by their feet, and takes a sharp razor and cuts their throats—after feeding them steroids for seven weeks. But they think that’s all right. Now, if you put a razor on a rooster, it sounds brutal. But cutting one’s throat with a razor after seven weeks is brutal, too.”

That is no defense of cockfighting, from a humane perspective. Yet the context, helps to explain why thousands of participants in poultry production attend cockfights on weekends and after hours. Cockfighting may be their form of ritual expiation. The sadistic aspect of cockfighting is self-evident. More subtle is the aspect of singling out a favored animal among a species that is routinely victimized, raising that animal with special care and attention, conferring upon the animal an exalted status, and then sending the animal out as an alter-ego to kill or be killed. Raising and fighting a gamecock is, in truth, much like selecting, consecrating, and then sacrificing a scapegoat to absolve oneself of sin. Though most cockfighters in the U.S. appear to have no conscious awareness of the similarity, cockfighting in northeastern India and Bali is actually practiced as a form of expiatory sacrifice.

Lauding the courage of the bull who keeps charging, the “gameness” of pit bull terriers, and the “cockiness” of strutting gamecocks is central to the culture of animal fighting. But whether the animals imagine they are fighting to establish reproductive dominance, or understand that they are fighting for their lives, the courage they display is on their own behalf, in forced confrontation. It is therefore very different from the altruistic courage of heroic animals and humans who put themselves at risk on behalf of others—like the courage of Klinka the chicken.

Reasons for hope

On the afternoon of November 19, 2008, near the **ANIMAL PEOPLE** headquarters, **ANIMAL PEOPLE** president Kim Bartlett saw a coyote dash into the woods with a chicken in his mouth. About 100 yards up the road, Bartlett saw a second chicken—Klinka—sitting beside the road, disabled by head and neck injuries.

The coyote apparently ate the first chicken, or delivered her to a mate, and was seen a few minutes later returning for Klinka. But Klinka was instead brought to the **ANIMAL PEOPLE** office in a cat carrier.

For days Klinka did not eat. She appeared to be in shock. At one point she seemed close to death—but gradually she regained her strength and began to demonstrate considerable personality, including in debate with herself in a mirror.

On January 24, 2009 Bartlett looked out the window to the back yard to check on Klinka. She was chasing the cat Osiris—rescued in Egypt by Northwestern University law professor Kristen Stilt—who had a little bird in his mouth. Klinka pursued Osiris until he dropped the bird, who flew through the chain link fence to safety. Then Klinka patrolled that area of the fence for a few minutes. “I always heard that chickens would bravely confront predators to defend their chicks,” Bartlett said, “but Klinka chased a cat to save an unrelated bird, not even of the same species.”

A boom in the popularity of keeping backyard poultry hints that chickens may soon supplant parrots and pigeons as the most popular household birds, partly because of increasing interest in obtaining eggs from a verifiably well-treated flock. Even so, most urban dwellers are unlikely to ever become personally acquainted with a chicken.

Yet humans worldwide appear to increasingly agree that chickens deserve much better treatment. One leading indicator was the turn of public opinion against cockfighting within the past decade in the last U.S. states that allowed it. By the time Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and finally Louisiana banned cockfighting, polls in each state showed that from two-thirds to upward of 80% of the voters believed cockfighting to be unacceptably cruel.

That alarmed the poultry industry. As poultry trade journals warned, overwhelming public rejection of cockfighting would not bode well for such practices as battery caging and debeaking. The passage of Proposition Two by 63% of California voters in November 2008, forcing a phase-out of battery caging, underscored the point.

European Union legislation requires that battery caging must end by 2012, but consumer pressure is in many nations driving more rapid progress. British consumption of eggs from free-range hens in April 2008 overtook consumption from battery-caged hens. The upscale Waitrose and Marks & Spencer supermarket chains had already quit selling eggs from battery-caged hens. Sainsbury’s, the third-largest British chain, followed in January 2009.

“Statistics released to *The Independent* by the market researchers TNS show that sales of free-range chickens rose throughout 2008,” wrote *Independent* consumer affairs correspondent Martin Hickman, “despite concerns that shoppers would ditch animal welfare during the financial downturn.”

The poultry industry is worried enough that in Oklahoma the Farm Bureau Federation is pushing legislation to prevent the passage of ballot initiatives addressing farm animal issues. Assessed Humane Society of the U.S. factory farming campaign director Paul Shapiro, “They want to bar voters from future efforts to halt cruel confinement, to curb manure dumping by factory farms, and to stop the overuse of antibiotics fed to animals on factory farms. Cockfighting enthusiasts and their legislative allies tried this sort of power grab a few years ago,” Shapiro recalled, “but our anti-cockfighting initiative passed, and voters rejected the effort to take away their voting rights. This will be a tougher fight,” Shapiro acknowledged, because now agribusiness is directly involved, no longer relying on cockfighters as a first line of defense.

Because raising poultry makes more efficient use of feedstock and produces markedly fewer “greenhouse gases” that contribute to global warming than raising pigs or cattle, the poultry industry hopes to continue the global growth trend of recent decades, even as the “red meat” sector may decline.

But in October 2008 researchers from three Dutch agribusiness research groups presented to the lower chamber of the Dutch Parliament the findings from an apparent first-ever opinion survey about culling male chicks. More than 60% of respondents disapproved of the practice. The researchers informed the politicians that they would begin researching ways to abolish it. Possible methods include identifying “male” eggs before they hatch, and manipulating the environmental factors involved in the gender determination of chicks.

The Australian Poultry CRC research group in January 2009 announced that it has developed and patented a way to “silence the expression of genes that tell the growing embryo to become female or male, without having to genetically modify the chicken.”

“Hatcheries, farmers, and most importantly, ethically minded consumers will all benefit,” said Australian Poultry CRC commercialization and technology transfer manager Lloyd Thomsen.

Animal advocates might prefer to see an end to animal agriculture. Yet eliminating the ideas that sentient lives are trash, and that sport may be made of disposing of them, is a quantum leap forward in how humans perceive and treat animals.

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President & Administrator:

Kim Bartlett – anpeople@whidbey.com

Editor: Merritt Clifton – anmlpepl@whidbey.com

Web producer: Patrice Greanville

Newswire monitor: Cathy Young Czapla

P.O. Box 960

Clinton, WA 98236-0960

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## LETTERS

### Supplements stink

Re “Estrogen supplements double cancer risk,” in the January/February 2009 edition of **ANIMAL PEOPLE**: estrogen supplements based on pregnant mares’ urine are not only harmful for women’s health, but also cause women who take them to have a bad body odor. They smell like horse urine. You can always tell when a woman is taking the estrogen supplements because of the bad odor she has. If you are anywhere within 10 feet of such a woman you can smell it.

If estrogen supplements make a woman stink, can they be any good for her health? There are natural supplements that are

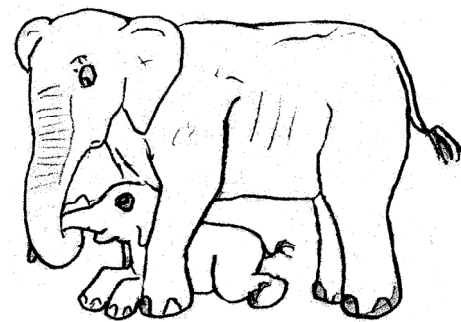
#### Editor’s note:

*Drugs that alter the hormonal balance of any species may potentially change body odor, and as humans have widely varied olfactory acuity, perhaps some people can detect at a sniff whether others are taking hormones based on pregnant mare’s urine. However, birth control drugs and post-menopausal estrogen supplements based on pregnant mare’s urine have been sold in the U.S. since 1942, have been among the most*

### Dog who survived bizarre experiment is adopted



Perry heading home. (KACPAW)



safe and good for the health. Horse urine is not something that people should put in their bodies. People are not horses, and horse hormones are an unnatural, biologically harmful substance for people.



—Elaine Woodriff  
Petaluma, CA  
<ew0220@sonic.net>

*widely used and most controversial drugs for much of this time, and amid the ongoing debate, this allegation, while not entirely unheard of, has rarely been mentioned. The chief concerns from a humane perspective are that the mares used in hormone production typically have restricted movement for much of their pregnancy, and that most of their foals go to slaughter, since there is little other commercial interest in them.*

Perry, whose case was described in the July/August 2007 **ANIMAL PEOPLE** article “Pound Seizure shocks Sri Lanka,” and in several follow-ups, was adopted on January 15, 2009. Perry was the only dog who survived the butchery to which two vets subjected her, Wussie, and Polly in the name of research. I was sad to let Perry go, but she needed a loving home. Perry went off with her new people happily, and has settled in well.

As a direct outcome of this horrible case, the Colombo University Ethical Review Committee has drawn up guidelines on how to protect animals used for research. With much input from many experts, both local and overseas, the document is now being finalized.



—Champa Fernando  
Secretary, KACPAW  
191 Trinco Street  
Kandy, Sri Lanka  
<nihalas@slt.lk>

## How to euthanize puppies & kittens

A puppy I took to my veterinarian was recently diagnosed with “telescoping intestine,” a lethal abnormality in development. The vet recommended immediate euthanasia. I reluctantly agreed. I wanted to hold the puppy while he was euthanized, but the vet tech told me that this was not possible, because they had to hold him down to euthanize him. That didn’t sound right, so I asked more questions.

Finally, to their obvious distress, the vet divulged that their standard method for euthanizing tiny puppies (and kittens) is to inject the euthanasia drug directly into the newborn’s heart. Horrified, I asked if that caused a heart attack, because heart attacks are horribly painful, and they assured me it is all over very quickly.

I asked if puppies screamed when this was done to them, and they sadly admitted that fact, but again assured me it was the best thing for the puppy.

#### Editor’s note:

*The current edition of the American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia (2007) states, following every edition since at least 1993, “Intracardiac injection must only be used if the animal is heavily sedated, unconscious, or anesthetized.” No exceptions are made for animals of any age, size, or species.*

*We asked shelter consultant and euthanasia instructor Doug Fakkema, of Charleston, South Carolina, to comment.*

*“The experience Ms. Follett describes does not surprise me,” Fakkema responded. “Sadly,” despite the AVMA guidelines, “there is no euthanasia standard of practice in veterinary medicine. Since there is little if any information given on the subject in veterinary school, it is up to the veterinarian to learn how to euthanize after they graduate. They are typically taught how to euthanize in their first practice experience—usually by a vet who learned how to do it in his or her first practice.*

*“There is of course no federal veterinary practice act,” Fakkema continued, “and I have never seen a state veterinary practice*

*I brought my tiny puppy home. He died on his own a few hours later, with me at his side, in a safe warm place, without terror.*

Later, tormented by the thought of hundreds or thousands of newborn puppies and kittens every year experiencing this excruciating and terrifying end, I called my vet and asked him if I found myself in this situation again, if I paid extra, could I get my puppy anesthetized before they jabbed him in the heart with a needle. My vet agreed. He said the puppy could be placed inside an anesthesia mask and would breathe in enough gas to become sedated. I asked why he had not offered that option. I got no answer.

What sickened me is that I had to ask for this humane service. This should be standard.



—Tamara Follett  
Ogdensburg, N.Y. & Napanee, Ontario  
<www.PreventDogBites.com>

*act that prohibits intracardiac administration of anything, including sodium pentobarbital. Veterinarians are usually exempt from animal shelter euthanasia regulations, so that in states that prohibit intracardiac injections in animal shelters, such as California and Ohio, the prohibition does not apply to licensed veterinarians in private practice.*

*The best option for euthanizing very young puppies and kittens, Fakkema said, “would be an intraperitoneal injection. In my experience, 200 milligrams (1/2 cc) [of sodium pentobarbital] is sufficient to produce rapid and painless sedation, anesthesia, coma and death.” The second best option, Fakkema believes, “would be an intramuscular injection of ketamine/xylazine (or similar) to anesthetize the animal, then intracardiac injection with sodium pentobarbital.*

*The distant third best option, said Fakkema, “would be to anesthetize the animal with isoflurane, then administer sodium pentobarbital via intracardiac injection before the animal wakes up. The latter must be done quickly,” Fakkema cautioned, “as the effect of the gas anesthetic is very short.”*

## Montcalm County sends animals to labs

I just found your website and was surprised that there was no news of what is going on in Montcalm County, Michigan. Our shelter has been giving live animals to R&R Research, of Howard City, for over 30 years in exchange for carcass hauling. The contract recently came up for renewal and the commissioners gave the dealer a six-month extension. Meanwhile, a “blue ribbon panel” has been formed to discuss shelter policies and procedures, pound seizure, etc. Who is on this panel? Well, R&R Research owner Jim Woudenberg, for one, as well as his own personal vet.



—Jeanne Urbanski  
Concerned Citizens Coalition  
Stanton, Michigan  
<jeanneurbanski@yahoo.com>  
<www.cccmontcalm.org>

### Michael Vick

I saw on the news how Michael Vick will soon be asking to be allowed back into the National Football League. I know a lot of people are not happy to see Vick coming out of prison, with good reason. And I’m thinking too that the NFL must be nervous about it even if his talents are still there.

Michael Vick has been punished for his crime, but what if society could ask him to prove himself further? What if, for instance, he agreed to donate 2 to 5% of his future NFL income to help abused and abandoned animals in shelters? Then we would have created a win/win situation, as the income would help our cause, and the NFL would not be as nervous about taking Vick back, and Vick himself could further his career.



—Christy Erwin  
Reno, Nevada  
<cianne@charter.net>

#### Editor’s note:

*Michael Vick in December 2007 agreed to pay at least \$928,000 restitution, perhaps more depending on the final reckoning of expenses, to the eight animal rescue groups who handled the 47 pit bull terriers that were impounded in connection with his arrest.*



#### Editor’s note:

*The Montcalm County issue erupted into national view after the January/February 2009 edition of ANIMAL PEOPLE went to press. Montcalm is “one of only four counties in Michigan who release animals to shelters, the others being Gratiot, Mecosta, and Osceola,” according to Ed Cutlip of the Grand Rapids news web site MediaMouse.com. “There are only ten dealers in the country that still obtain animals from shelters, including three in Michigan,” adds Cutlip. Five other Michigan counties have since 2006 quit providing animals to laboratory suppliers, including Eaton County in May 2008.*

*Michigan Animal News founder Justine DePalma brought the Montcalm County practices into local view with a March 2008 investigative report and a July 2008 interview of then newly hired county animal control director Patricia Lentz. DePalma noted that R&R Research was cited for alleged Animal Welfare Act violations in 2005 and 2006, including transporting dogs who were chained to a livestock trailer. “In the 1990s,” DePalma added, “R&R was ordered by the Michigan Attorney General to cease and desist after discovering that R&R listed itself as an animal shelter in the yellow pages.”*

*Several leading national animal advocacy organizations have become involved, including Friends of Animals. FoA is sponsoring a presentation in Montcalm County by 2009 No Kill Conference organizer Nathan Winograd on how to achieve no-kill animal control in a rural community—a transition Winograd achieved in 2001 in Thompson County, New York.*

We invite readers to submit letters and original unpublished commentary—please, nothing already posted to a web site—via e-mail to <anmlpepl@whidbey.com> or via postal mail to: **ANIMAL PEOPLE**, P.O. Box 960, Clinton, WA 98236 USA.

## SIGN MY PLEDGE

## MY NAME IS CORKY AND I WAS FOUND IN A DUMPSTER...

### North Shore Animal League America’s Help Me Heal Program Cares for Pets in Need

Every day, North Shore Animal League America cares for unfortunate animals who are victims of abuse and neglect or who suffer from chronic illness through a life-saving program called Help Me Heal. The animals in the Help Me Heal Program face treatments ranging from minor to serious and some must spend many weeks recovering.

Recently, a 3-month-old puppy became a member of the Help Me Heal Program. Corky was found trembling and whimpering in a dumpster that was filled with harmful construction debris. Somebody considered him garbage and threw him away.

When a kind man heard Corky crying under the trash and saw that he was wounded, he immediately took him to the Animal League, who enrolled Corky in their Help Me Heal Program. Corky suffered from a dislocated leg bone, eye irritation and was in desperate need of nurturing.

Corky spent several weeks in the Animal League’s care where he was nurtured and loved. When he was healthy, he was immediately adopted into a loving home.

The Help Me Heal Program helps animals receive the medical care they need to live a happy, healthy, normal life. You can help. To learn more about Corky and the Help Me Heal Program, please visit: [AnimalLeague.org/help-me-heal](http://AnimalLeague.org/help-me-heal).

Please sign my pledge and help end animal cruelty [www.AnimalLeague.org/CorkyStory](http://www.AnimalLeague.org/CorkyStory)





# Meat Industry Sues to Overturn Landmark Anti-Cruelty Law



**T**wo large agribusiness groups, the American Meat Institute and the National Meat Association, have filed a far-reaching lawsuit in federal court aimed at overturning the Humane Farming Association's (HFA) recently enacted downed animal legislation in California (AB 2098, authored by Assemblyman Paul Krekorian).

The meat industry is claiming, among other things, that states do not have the right to pass meaningful farm animal and consumer protection legislation when it surpasses lax federal regulations. Whether it is HFA's historic new law in California, or other farm animal protection legislation, ***the industry is desperately seeking ways to subvert our democratic process – and overturn the will of the people.***

The term "downed animal" describes animals too sick or injured to stand up on their own. Rather than putting these animals out of their misery, the meat industry keeps them alive in order to get them to slaughterhouses. Following a long and painful journey, they are brutally dragged off trucks, butchered, and sold for human consumption.

In order to hinder the passage of legitimate laws that would prohibit these cruel practices, several years ago the meat industry began advancing its own legislation. The goal: to continue the slaughter of downed animals while giving the public a false impression that the animal cruelty and food safety issues had been resolved.

The most infamous of those measures was SB 692, California's earlier downed animal statute which was enacted in the 1990s. Backed by the Farm Bureau, Eshelman's Slaughterhouse and others, SB 692 *perpetuated* the cruel exploitation of downed animals. And with many people being misled into thinking that the problem had been solved, passing a real ban on the downed animal trade became more difficult.

A turning point occurred in 2008 when Humane Society of the U.S. video captured slaughterhouse workers repeatedly kicking, shocking, ramming with forklifts, and even spraying water down the noses of downed animals in order to get them to the killing floor.

Nearly 45 million pounds of beef from these animals ended up in the nation's school lunch programs. This set off the largest beef recall in U.S. history. Much of this condemned beef had already been consumed by our nation's school children and the public at large.

The public, as well as legislators, soon rallied behind what HFA had advocated from the very start: The sale of downed animals must be *banned* – rather than perpetuated by worthless regulations. And this ban took the form of HFA's legislation known as AB 2098. This historic measure went into effect on January 1, 2009. In addition to banning the marketing of downed cattle, AB 2098 also prohibits, for the first time ever, the marketing of other sick and injured farm animals, including pigs, sheep, and goats.

Of course, the industry would prefer to continue its downer business as usual – and as previously permitted under the old and widely-discredited California downer statute. And as evidenced by this lawsuit aimed at blocking AB 2098, ***those who profit from the sale of sick and injured animals are asking the courts to turn back the clock.***

HFA is now mobilizing to forcefully respond to the industry's destructive legal assault. In addition to seeing that they are defeated in federal court, HFA is preparing a major counterattack in the court of public opinion. With your support, we will hit back and expose the Meat Institute's insidious intentions to continue the sale of meat from diseased animals to school children and others across the country.

Please help us fight back against the Meat Institute and others seeking to perpetuate animal cruelty. This is a battle we simply must win! Thank you.

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## Can a label make pork “humane”? British agency says no (from page one)

out their lives in unacceptable conditions.”

The Advertising Standards Authority has often ruled against animal advocacy claims. Between December 2005 and August 2006 the ASA upheld complaints against Europeans for Medical Progress, the National Anti-Vivisection Society (of Britain), PETA, and the RSPCA.

The ASA ruling this time, however, hit the British pig industry hard, at a vulnerable time, coming less than a month after a multi-party Parliamentary report “found that the U.K. pig herd had declined by 40% since 1997,” summarized BBC News. The report asserted that British welfare standards are largely to blame for recent losses estimated by BPEX as £7 per pig sold.

“The EU plans to implement by 2013 a ban on the use of stalls and tethers similar to that imposed in the U.K. a decade ago,” BBC News continued. “Unlike their British rivals, farmers in countries like Denmark and the Netherlands will receive state support to make the changes.”

Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Environment, Food, & Rural Affairs Committee “found that currently up to 66% of imported pig meat could have been reared using these restrictive methods,” BBC News said.

The Parliamentary report was released four days before Danny Penman of *The Daily Mail* published his findings from an undercover investigation of the Polish pig industry, focusing on facilities operated by the U.S.-based Smithfield conglomerate and the Smithfield subsidiary Agri Plus.

“There is no suggestion that any of the farms I visited were behaving illegally under Polish or European law,” wrote Penman, despite the deplorable conditions he observed. “They were, however, producing pig meat under conditions that would be questionable in the U.K.”

“Ten years ago our government mercifully outlawed some of the worst aspects of factory pig farming,” Penman explained. “Farmers were banned from castrating their animals without anaesthetic and prevented

from routinely clipping their teeth and amputating their tails. Sow stalls were also banned. These new rules had one major flaw: they applied only to the U.K. This left supermarkets free to buy cheaper, less humane pork from Europe. To make matters worse, the E.U. and other European institutions soon started pouring subsidies into Poland and Romania to create the type of industrial pig farming now banned in the U.K.”

About 20% of British shoppers told the Shopper Trends 2009 survey, published in January, that they consider animal welfare to be a key factor in making product choices, up from 13% in 2008. The percentage who take animal welfare into account increased to 46%, from 38% in 2008.

However, just trying to buy British pork, explained Penman, would not ensure that British standards were met. “In a bizarre piece of labelling legislation,” wrote Penman, “retailers are entitled to call a meat product ‘British’ even the meat is sourced from abroad. As long as the end product has been processed

and packed in the U.K., it can be labelled ‘British.’ In this way, foreign pork has increasingly come to dominate the market.”

The E.U. has yet to legislatively address all of the welfare issues covered in the 1998 British farm animal welfare law, but the Dutch animal welfare inspection organization Eyes On Animals in December 2008 reported that four Dutch supermarket chains are “finalizing plans to rid their shelves of meat from castrated male pigs,” after the advocacy organization Varkens in Nood in April 2008 “threatened to take them to court for causing unnecessary suffering.”

A variety of competing product labeling schemes purport to assure U.S. consumers that pigs have been raised and killed “humanely,” including at least five sponsored by animal welfare groups and two sponsored by pig industry fronts. The newest U.S. labeling scheme was announced on February 11, 2009 by Niman Ranch Inc., whose pig products were formerly certified by the Animal Welfare Institute.

## Atlantic Canada seal hunt starts slowly

**HALIFAX**—The 2009 Atlantic Canadian seal hunt opened quietly on Hays Island off Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, on February 4, with only one sealing vessel sailing. The much larger Gulf of St. Lawrence and Labrador Front phases of the hunt were expected to start several weeks later.

The most prominent protester appeared to be Atlantic Canadian Anti-Sealing Coalition spokesperson Bridget Curran. The Humane Society of the U.S. and International Fund for Animal Welfare usually make appearances at the start of the Gulf of St. Lawrence hunt. The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society ship *Farley Mowat*, seized by the Canadian government after confronting sealers near Cape Breton in April 2008, remains in custody in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans in November 2008 filed a statement of claim against the *Farley Mowat* for \$487,000 in dockage fees.

Sea Shepherd founder Paul Watson has billed the Canadian government \$1,000 per day for holding the *Farley Mowat*—which he had said would be retired, after the 2007-2008 Sea Shepherd winter campaign against

Japanese whaling in Antarctic waters.

Officially held to protect fish stocks, the Cape Breton hunt began one week before the scientific journal *Fish & Fisheries* published findings from modeling of climatic change which indicate that the already depleted Atlantic cod population is likely to fall another 50% by the year 2050.

The Hays Island seal hunt has a 2009 quota of 2,200, about 6.5% of the total for all phases of the hunt. Cape Breton sealers in 2008 killed 1,200 of a quota of 2,500.

Peaking at \$97 in 2006, harp seal pelt prices fell to \$33 in 2008.

New sealing rules requiring sealers to use firearms instead of clubs to kill seals don’t apply on Hays Island because use of firearms is illegal there, to avoid disturbing sea bird colonies.

A rare prosecution of a sealer for improperly killing seals concluded in the second week of February 2009 when Ashley Gould, 27, of Anchor Point, Newfoundland, was fined \$2,000 and suspended from participating in the first day of the 2009 Gulf of St. Lawrence hunt. Gould was videotaped in 2008 killing seal pups with a shovel.

## Cowboys lose copyright case

**CHICAGO**—The Electronic Frontiers Foundation on February 12, 2009 announced that the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association has agreed to pay \$25,000 and accept restraints on making claims of copyright violation against the animal advocacy group Showing Animals Respect & Kindness.

Asserting that SHARK had violated the federal Digital Millennium Act, the PRCA in December 2007 pressured YouTube into removing from the web several videos of rodeo violence posted by SHARK. The Electronic Frontiers Foundation then sued the PRCA on SHARK’s behalf.

“The money goes to EFF, not us,” SHARK founder Steve Hindi told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**. “That’s only fair, as they put a lot of time into the case, and we could never have won it without them. The exciting part for us is that the PRCA has agreed not to enforce a ‘no videotaping’ provision in its ticket contracts against us, unless it enforces the same provision against others. This means the PRCA may no longer selectively enforce the provision against critics.”

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## CORRECTIONS

The print edition of the January/February 2009 edition of **ANIMAL PEOPLE** in the article “Trying to help animals in Gaza” mentioned “the January 19, 2009 inauguration of new U.S. President Barack Obama.” The inauguration was actually on January 20.

Confusing Chester County, Pennsylvania, with Chester, Maryland, the print edition of the January/February 2009 article “‘First dog’ may be last Obama pick” misidentified actions of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture against breeder Linda Brown, who sold a dog to Vice President Joseph Biden, as actions of the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Both errors were corrected in the online edition.

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# Whale wars in Washington D.C. & the Southern Oceans

**WASHINGTON D.C.**—"The American people care deeply about protecting whales and do not want the U.S. to be the broker who capitulated to those who still want to kill whales for commercial gain," declared U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee chair Nick Rahall in a February 4, 2009 letter asking the acting U.S. Secretary of Commerce to replace William Hogarth as U.S. representative on the International Whaling Commission. Hogarth is also the current IWC chair.

The Rahall letter reinforced a February 2, 2009 appeal to U.S. President Barack Obama by the Whales Need Us coalition, representing 13 prominent anti-whaling organizations, headed by Animal Welfare Institute wildlife biologist D.J. Schubert.

Alleged the Humane Society International division of the Humane Society of the U.S., "Documents from closed-door meetings corroborate the disturbing nature of a secret deal the U.S. is attempting to broker with Japan to legitimize and expand commercial whaling. Hogarth led the small group of member countries that devised the proposal...To appease Japan—the most vocal of the three nations that still conduct large-scale whaling—the group worked behind-the-scenes to draft packages for consideration by the full commission which would allow Japan and possibly other countries to expand commercial whale hunts to coastal waters."

The purported deal would follow the recommendations of a "Whale Symposium" held by the Pew Charitable Trusts in February 2008. The symposium concluded that "the most promising compromise" to end conflict with Japan over the 23-year-old IWC moratorium on commercial whaling "would recognize potentially legitimate claims by coastal whaling communities; suspend scientific whaling in its current form and respect sanctuaries; and define a finite number of whales that can be taken by all of the world's nations."

Charged HSI, "The Hogarth package would undermine the IWC's moratorium on commercial whaling and provide an official

stamp of approval for Japan's self-allotted quotas," through which the Japanese whaling fleet has killed more than 15,000 whales.

"Hogarth's plan proposes to put all decisions regarding conservation and protection issues on hold for five years," HSI continued, "but would result in an immediate partial lifting of the moratorium on commercial whaling once the deal has IWC consent.

"The only concession that Japan makes under the deal," HSI said, "is to promise to reduce the number of whales it kills in the IWC-designated Southern Ocean Sanctuary. There will be no mandatory sanctions should the promise be broken. The plan also opens the door for other countries to initiate hunts in their coastal waters."

Hogarth, dean of the University of South Florida marine science department, was appointed U.S. representative to the IWC by former U.S. president George W. Bush.

Hogarth told *St. Petersburg Times* staff writer Craig Pittman that he intends to resign after the IWC elects a new chair and vice chair in June 2009, but that will be after the IWC acts on whatever proposals are advanced at the 2009 IWC annual meeting, to be held in Santiago, Chile, June 16-19.

## Meanwhile at sea

Word of the Hogarth deal and the appeals for his replacement reached mass media just as the Japanese whaling fleet, operating well inside the Southern Oceans Whale Sanctuary, turned more aggressive in response to a fourth consecutive winter of pursuit by the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society.

Shadowed by the Sea Shepherd vessel *Steve Irwin*, the whalers apparently killed no whales from December 18, 2008 until January 7, 2009, when the *Steve Irwin* returned to Australia to refuel. Catching up to the whaling fleet again on February 1, the Sea Shepherds "pursued them for another nine days, during which time the whalers were only able to kill five whales," reported an Environmental News Service correspondent from aboard the *Steve Irwin*. "Typically the

whalers take eight to 10 whales per day," said the ENS correspondent.

E-mailed Sea Shepherd founder Paul Watson, "On February 5th, the fifth day that the *Steve Irwin* had shut down all whaling activities by the Japanese fleet," in part by blocking the harpoon vessels as they tried to transport whale carcasses to the factory ship *Nisshin Maru* for processing, "the frustration of the whalers violently erupted. All three harpoon vessels attacked the *Steve Irwin*, making close passes with their ships, lobbing metal balls at our crew and using a Long Range Acoustical Device, which causes nausea and deafness. At one point they even pointed the LRAD at our helicopter, filming the confrontation from the skies."

British activist Steve Roest "became disoriented in an inflatable from the sonic blast, fell, and cut his head, needing five stitches," reported ENS. "Watson said this was followed by the *Nisshin Maru* turning into the *Steve Irwin* and attempting to ram the Sea Shepherd vessel at full speed."

"On February 6th," e-mailed Watson, "two incidents occurred where the *Steve Irwin* collided with harpoon vessels as they forced their way past the *Steve Irwin*'s

blockade. These collisions were not intentional on the part of Sea Shepherd."

The *Steve Irwin* turned back to port on February 9. "Watson said he believes that on January 31 the Japanese government dispatched a security vessel called the *Taiyo Maru #38* from Fiji to intercept the *Steve Irwin*," reported ENS.

"The ship is believed to be carrying a special boarding unit and has orders to seize the ship and all video evidence, according to a source in Fiji," Watson told ENS. "We cannot allow this documentation to be captured."

Added ENS, "The *Steve Irwin* had only another four days of fuel before being forced to return anyway, said Watson, who plans to begin preparations to return next season with a faster and longer range ship."

Concluded Watson, "We found and engaged the whalers earlier than ever, chasing the whaling fleet over 2,000 miles, and for 27 days we physically prevented the killing of any whales. We've cost the Japanese whaling industry millions of dollars."

But with the U.S. delegation to the IWC apparently wavering, the whalers' determination to continue killing whales appeared to be as strong as ever.

## Confusion over Icelandic posture on whaling

**REYKJAVIK, Iceland**—Leaving office on January 27, 2009 after the collapse of the coalition government in which he was fisheries minister, Einar Gudfinnsson as his last official act in office authorized Icelandic whalers to kill up to 150 fin whales and 150 minke whales per year.

Fin whales are internationally recognized as an endangered species. Icelandic whalers had killed seven since 2006.

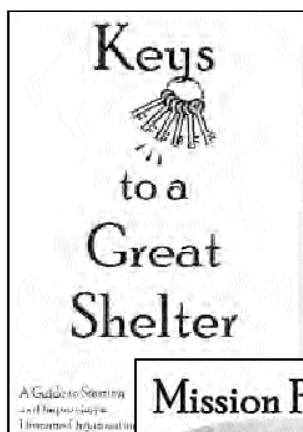
Gudfinnsson's action was seen as a gesture of defiance toward the European Union, which "would be likely to demand an end to whaling as a condition of membership," said BBC News environment correspondent Richard Black. Much of the Icelandic fishing industry opposes joining the EU, in resistance to the EU's Common Fisheries Policy.

Gudfinnsson's successor, Steingrímur Sigfusson, who is both fisheries and finance minister in a new coalition government, on February 4, 2009 told media that, "those with vested interests in whaling" had been warned that the whaling quota would be reconsidered. On February 18, however, Sigfusson said he had been legally advised that, "The Icelandic state is bound by the decision," at least for 2009. Sigfusson hinted that the quota might be cut for the next four years.

While Gudfinnsson tried to increase the Icelandic whaling quota, Norway in December 2008 reduced its quota from 1,052 in 2008 to 885 for 2009. The new quota will be in effect until 2013. With little market for whale meat, Norwegian whalers have killed only about half the quota in recent years.

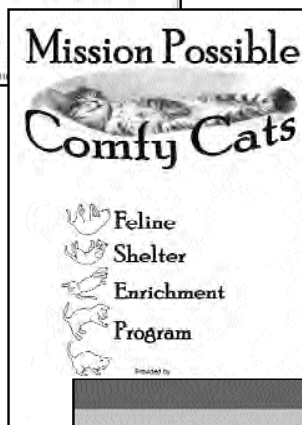
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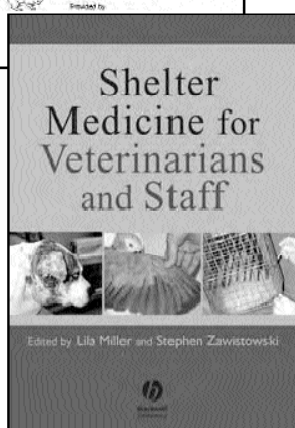
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# Puppy mill raids boost lawmaker interest

(from page 1)

"The new arrivals are loving our large suites with comfy beds and heated floors," posted NOAH executive director Austin Gates. "A few are figuring out what toys are for. We're working on teaching the rest. Dozens of volunteers and staff are spending time loving, petting and brushing the dogs. It's probably the first time in their lives they've had this much human companionship."

The Humane Society of Skagit Valley and Saving Pets One at a Time in Burlington and Old Dog Haven in Lake Stevens also handled large numbers of dogs. Saving Pets One at a Time estimated that volunteers spent 700 hours on the new arrivals within the first three days after they came.

The Washington puppy mill investigation started, according to Holtz and Scott North of the *Daily Herald*, when web developer Brandon Hatch, 34, of Kettle Falls, visited an old friend in Gold Bar. While the friend boasted that he made \$2 million a year from selling dogs, Hatch found a house full of badly kept dogs amid accumulated feces.

"Some dogs were in small crates. Many roamed at will. Even the attic had been converted into a makeshift kennel," Holtz and North wrote. "Hatch said he knew children sometimes slept in that home. When he saw their bed, also befouled by the dogs, he called Child Protective Services."

"Right is right. Wrong is wrong.

And this is just plain wrong, all of it," Hatch told Holtz and North.

Jason D. Larsen and Serrena L. Larsen, both 37, of Gold Bar, were each charged with six counts of first-degree felonious animal cruelty. Their home was registered to Mary Ann Holleman, sister of Snohomish dog breeder Renee Roske. A microchip found in one dog identified the dog as belonging to Roske.

"Time and again since 1996, Snohomish County officials found dozens more dogs living at Roske's home than are allowed," wrote Holtz. "On one visit, officials found dogs in a dug-out subterranean room, the entrance hidden at the back of a closet. When sheriff's officials visited Roske's home the day after the Gold Bar raid, they found 44 dogs, nearly double the maximum of 25 allowed under county law."

The Roske investigation led to the January 21 seizure of 443 dogs from a kennel in Mount Vernon, in Skagit County, and to 10 counts each for various alleged offenses filed against property owners Richard and Marjorie Sundberg.

Marjorie Sundberg is the mother of Renee Roske and Mary Ann Holleman.

## Southern cases

While investigators worked to unravel the interlocking Washington cases, and vol-

unteers worked to rehabilitate the rescued dogs, a similar case broke in Wayne County, North Carolina. Two hundred eighty-three dogs, many of them pregnant, were impounded at the Wayne County Fairgrounds.

"Most have horrible dental disease," veterinarian Lisa Dixon told Marlon A. Walker of Associated press. "Most are losing their teeth, or have teeth that need to be removed."

Alleged puppy miller Virginia Thornton eventually surrendered the dogs to Wayne County Animal Control director Justin Scally, who had reportedly been seeking to find a way to evacuate Thornton Kennels since December 2007. Scally in turn signed the dogs over to the Humane Society of the U.S.

HSUS called animal welfare societies from across the country, reported Catharin Shepard of the *Goldboro News-Argus*. As soon as the dogs were cleared for transport, Shepard wrote, the organizations "pulled their vans and trucks onto the fairgrounds gravel and started loading up."

As in the Washington cases, most of the dogs are expected to easily find adoptive homes—after weeks or months of costly veterinary care and behavioral rehabilitation.

PetSmart Charities provided an air-conditioned vehicle to help move the dogs, and sent 16 tons of supplies to the scene, worth about \$60,000, spokesperson Kimberly Noetzel told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**.

As the Thornton Kennels dogs began their journey to new homes, American SPCA and American Humane Association staff prepared to transfer about 250 small breed dogs removed from a Tennessee puppy mill to regional humane societies for adoption placement. The dogs were seized on February 11, 2009 after a five-month investigation by the White County Humane Society and White County sheriff Oddie Shoupe.

"It's doubtful any of these dogs have ever been walked on a leash. Many have never been outdoors," said ASPCA director of field operations Jeff Eyre.

Related criminal charges were reportedly pending.

## Midwest busts

Also on February 11, 2009, the Humane Society of Missouri impounded 93 Yorkshire terriers and two cockatiels from an unlicensed kennel near Springfield.

The illegal kennel was reportedly only four years old, but Humane Society of Missouri anti-cruelty task force director Tim Rickey told Leah Thorsen of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that the dogs there were in the "most horrible conditions I've ever seen," including paw injuries that Rickey attributed to dogs living in cages with wire mesh bottoms.

Meanwhile, illustrating the difficulty of making charges pertaining to alleged puppy milling stick under existing laws, Otter Tail County, Minnesota district court judge Waldemar Senyk on January 28, 2009 dismissed five of nine charges of animal cruelty, tor-

ture and practicing veterinary medicine without a licence that had been pending against Pick of the Litter Kennels owner Kathy Jo Bauck, 52. Bauck, of New York Mills, was to be tried by jury on the remaining charges, beginning on February 10, 2009. Bauck was charged after a six-week undercover investigation by the Companion Animal Protection Society, of Boston, whose agent worked for Pick of the Litter Kennels incognito.

"The details of the case are difficult to read: allegations of puppies ripped in pieces from their mother's womb, and of dogs, even pregnant, submerged in insecticide baths. One of the charges against Bauck is 'torture,' a gross misdemeanor," wrote Tad Vezner of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

"In May 2008," Vezner recalled, "Bauck pleaded guilty to [a prior charge of] practicing veterinary medicine without a license, a misdemeanor. Her USDA-licensed facility, according to the agency's latest report in 2006, then housed 1,326 dogs. But her last two USDA inspection reports, supplied by her attorney and dated July and September 2008, showed no noncompliance."

## Legislative response

The discrepancy between the USDA reports and the documentation introduced as evidence against Bauck, collected by the Companion Animal Protection Society within the same time frame, brought to legislative notice that Minnesota has some of the biggest dog breeding kennels in the U.S., but no state-level oversight of the industry.

Two bills to establish state-level oversight of dog breeding have been introduced. A bill by state senator Don Betzold, endorsed by many humane societies, would require annual inspections of any kennel with six or more breeding females, plus certification by the Minnesota Board of Animal Health. A breeder-backed bill by state senator Steve Dille "would require no mandatory inspections. Breeders would be required to register with a local agency every four years, and inspections would be complaint-based, unless a county decided otherwise," Vezner wrote.

Most of the pending state bills emphasize introducing state-level registration and inspection, with widely varied thresholds for application.

Data abstracted by **ANIMAL PEOPLE** from 28 puppy mill cases prosecuted in the first four months of 2008 found that about 60% had fewer than 50 dogs including puppies, and were essentially "backyard breeders." Another 20% had fewer than 50 adult dogs. Only 20% were operating at the level at which breeder-supported bills would typically take effect.

Bills to introduce state-level inspection are usually opposed by breeders for allegedly introducing redundancy—and state-level inspection requirements introduced decades ago in several states were in effect dismantled by amendments that allowed USDA inspections to substitute for actually being inspected by state agencies.

A bill pushed in Illinois by the American SPCA "would cap the number of breeding dogs a breeder can own at 20 and ban anyone convicted of cruelty from obtaining a breeding license," summarized Eric Naing of the *Springfield State Journal-Register*. "The measure would require breeders to keep dogs in well-heated and cooled facilities with ample cage space, access to outdoor areas and non-wire flooring," all requirements pursued by the humane community for more than 70 years—and, Naing added, "Breeder licensing would switch to the state Department of Financial and Professional Regulation from the Department of Agriculture."

The latter provision alone might have been enough to doom the bill. Dog breeders and agribusiness have been politically allied against proposed puppy mill regulation for more than 50 years since the early 20th century, when the typical dog breeder was a farmer who bred hunting dogs as a sideline.

The alliance of dog breeders and agribusiness has so far succeeded in keeping

(continued on page 9)

## Dogfighters vs. the Taliban

**ISLAMABAD**—"Thousands of villagers" attended a dogfighting tournament in Toba Tek Singh, Pakistan on February 15, 2009, "chaired by the social and political personalities of the area," Ravi Foundation executive director Ashfaq Fateh told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**.

"At least 34 dogs took part," Fateh added.

A schoolteacher and prominent advocate of both human and animal rights, Fateh had reason to be gravely concerned when the the chief minister of North West Frontier Province of Pakistan announced on February 16, 2009 that the Pakistani government will recognize Taliban rule of the

embattled Swat valley, in exchange for a temporary ceasefire. The deal allows the Taliban to enforce an interpretation of Islamic law that includes keeping women indoors and prohibiting female education.

But the Taliban also prohibits dogfighting.

One measure of the declining influence of the Taliban in Kabul, Afghanistan, after six years of a U.S. military presence, is a recent resurgence of dogfighting as popular entertainment. **ANIMAL PEOPLE** counted about 400 people in a *New York Times* photo of a Kabul dogfight in December 2007. A *New York Times* photo of another dogfight at the same site in December 2008 showed 2,000 people.

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## Raids boost lawmaker interest *(from page 8)*

the responsibility for puppy mill law enforcement under the jurisdiction of state agriculture departments and the USDA.

However, since the November 2008 passage of Proposition Two in California by 63% of the voters, some commentators in trade journals and on web sites have suggested that the alliance of puppy millers and factory farmers may have become counter-productive. Noting how convincingly California voters rejected factory-style pig and poultry farming, some dog breeders would prefer to avoid being associated with intensive confinement pig and

poultry operations, while some farm lobbyists would prefer to avoid having to defend puppy mills while seeking to escape more stringent regulation of pig and poultry husbandry.

Despite the cracks in solidarity, any move in any state to move any branch of animal husbandry out from under agriculture department control is still certain to meet vehement opposition from the major organizations representing breeders of every species.

Nebraska state senator Cap Dierks, DVM, on January 21, 2009 introduced a bill that would take a different approach. Instead

of requiring inspection of facilities, the Dierks bill would require pet stores and breeders to provide veterinary certification of each individual dog or cat they sell.

Not deemed likely to pass, the Dierks bill would harmonize the requirements for selling dogs and cats in the U.S. with the standards of most other nations for importing dogs and cats.

The U.S. dog and cat import requirements are weak compared to global norms, as demonstrated by an August 2008 case in which 30 sick and dehydrated puppies from a South Korean breeder were intercepted at Los Angeles International Airport. The puppies had been flown to the U.S. with falsified health certificates. Twenty of the 30 were euthanized as irrecoverably ill. Only five Maltese and five Yorkshire terriers survived.

"This triggered recognition that we have a serious problem with animals coming in from overseas," said Los Angeles Department of Animal Services general manager Ed Boks told *Los Angeles Daily News* staff writer Simone Schramm-Trimmm. "LAX, the Border Patrol, and other agencies helped us make the case," Boks continued, "that the U.S. is the only country in the world that allows a free flow of animals over its borders without veteri-

nary checks."

The U.S. has recently introduced a requirement that puppies imported for resale must be at least six months of age.

The South Korean-born puppies were auctioned by the Los Angeles Department of Animal Services in December 2008. Losing bidders were encouraged to take home other shelter animals.

"All 10 of the purebred puppy-mill survivors got new homes," wrote Schramm-Trimmm, "as did 52 other pets. Animal Services raised more than \$20,000 and got its message out: Adopt, don't shop." —M.C.



NOAH board president Kim Bowen, executive director Austin Gates, and staff member Kelly Hill log in dogs at the Skagit County Fairgrounds on January 22, 2009, the morning after 433 were impounded in Mount Vernon and more from other locations. (NOAH Center)

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Ring-Tailed Lemur: Photo Jana Seymour

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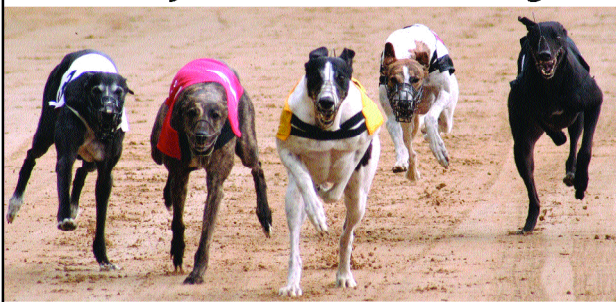
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## Events

**March 1-3: Texas Federation of Animal Care Services** conf., San Antonio. Info: <[pnordyke@austin.rr.com](mailto:pnordyke@austin.rr.com)>; <[www.txfacs.org](http://www.txfacs.org)>.

**March 15: Walk For Seals,** Victoria, British Columbia. Info: 250-588-0482; <[dave@friends-of-animals.org](mailto:dave@friends-of-animals.org)>.

**March 20: Meatout.** Info: Farm Animal Reform Movement, 1-800-632-8688; <[www.Meatout.org](http://www.Meatout.org)>.

**March 27: Georgetown Animal Law** conference, Washington, D.C. Info: <<https://www.law.georgetown.edu/cle/showEventDetail.cfm?ID=204>>.

**March 28: 23rd annual Genesis Awards,** Beverly Hills. Info: 1-818-501-2275.

**April 6-9: Animal Care Expo,** Las Vegas. Info: 1-800-248-EXPO; <[info@animalsheltering.org](mailto:info@animalsheltering.org)>; <[www.animalsheltering.org/expo](http://www.animalsheltering.org/expo)>.

**April 19-21: Texas Unites! The Lone Star Conference,** combining conferences of the Texas Animal Shelter Coalition & the Texas Federation of Humane Societies, Austin. Info: 817-790-5837; <[angel-pawsconsult@aol.com](mailto:angel-pawsconsult@aol.com)>; <[www.texasunites.org](http://www.texasunites.org)>.

**April 26: Veggie Pride Parade,** Los Angeles. Info: c/o Animal Acres, 661-269-5404; <[info@veggiepridela.com](mailto:info@veggiepridela.com)>; <[www.veggiepridela.com](http://www.veggiepridela.com)>.

*(continued on page 10)*

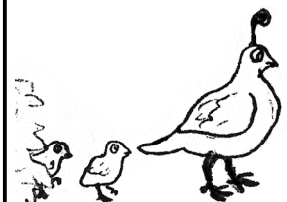
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—Mr. & Mrs. Richard Miller

In honor of the 40th birthday of Cindy McDaniel of Lenoir City, Tennessee.  
—Wendy Kobylarz





Hell & high water hit Down Under (from page 1)

their lives,” Wildlife Protection Association of Australia president Pat O’Brien told Stephen Coates of Agence France-Presse on February 9. “We’re not seeing a lot of injured animals yet because the fires were so hot the animals were killed on the spot. It will be ages before we can get into some of the affected areas,” O’Brien predicted, “and by the time we do, any injured animals will be dead.”

Royal SPCA of Australia chief executive Maria Mercurio, however, directed the RSPCA to use the time between the worst of the firestorm and rescuers gaining access to the area to prepare for one of the organization’s biggest relief efforts ever.

On February 10 the RSPCA was allowed into some fire zones. “Most animals, like resident humans, have died,” veterinarian and retired RSPCA president Hugh Wirth told ANIMAL PEOPLE. “Radiant heat killed them and then their bodies were burnt. Most who survived cannot be repaired.”

“The vet clinic at Kinglake was one of the casualties,” reported Daniel Lewis of the Sydney Morning Herald, “but vets have established temporary triage hospitals in Kinglake, Kinglake West and Whittlesea to treat injured wildlife and domestic animals. Fences and pasture have been destroyed, so housing and feeding animals—particularly horses—is proving difficult.”

“Kangaroo corpses lie scattered by the roadsides while wombats who survived the wildfire’s onslaught emerged from their burrows to find blackened earth and nothing to eat,” reported Associated Press writer Kristen

Gelineau. “Kangaroos who survived are suffering from burned feet. Hundreds of burned, stressed and dehydrated animals—including kangaroos, koalas, lizards and birds—have already arrived at shelters across the scorched region. Rescuers have doled out antibiotics, pain relievers and fluids to the critters, but some of the severely injured were euthanized.”

Vets Beyond Borders volunteer Chris Barton told Lewis that most kangaroos, wombats and koalas had to be euthanized because of eye and paw injuries from which they had little chance of successful recovery.

“You have got to be careful you don’t increase the suffering,” Barton explained. “Animals could be treated, but often die three weeks later, and you have put them through agony.”

“Animals can’t go through the months of rehabilitation needed to overcome serious burns,” agreed Australian Veterinary Association president Mark Lawrie, a veteran of bushfire response in his former job as chief vet for the RSPCA in New South Wales. “Animals go through hell just like people, but people see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Victorian Advocates for Animals president Lawrence Pope told Gelineau that volunteers “filled 10 giant bins with 2,300 flying foxes who succumbed to heat stroke. Volunteers tried to save the bats by giving them fluids and keeping them cool, Pope said, but the creatures were simply too stressed.”

But there were some success stories. More than 160 pets found alive in the fire zones were housed in emergency shelters set

up by Animal Aid, reported Megan McNaught of the Melbourne Herald Sun.

“We have a wallaby joey who has crispy fried ears because he stuck his head out of his mum’s pouch and lost all his whiskers and cooked up his nose,” Wildlife Victoria president Jon Rowdon told Gelineau.

The most popular animal survivor was Sam, a female koala with burnt paws who was found by firefighter David Tree during a backburning operation near Mirboo North.

“I could see she had sore feet and was in trouble, so I pulled over the fire truck,” recounted Tree to McNaught of the Herald Sun and Rohan Sullivan of Associated Press. “She just plonked herself down on her bum and looked at me like ‘put me out of my misery.’ I yelled for a bottle of water. I unscrewed the cap, tipped it up on her lips and she just took it naturally. She kept reaching for the bottle, almost like a baby. She drank three bottles. The most amazing part was when she grabbed my hand.”

Another firefighter videotaped the incident on a cell telephone. The video became a worldwide hit.

Taken to the Mountain Ash Wildlife Shelter, Sam was put on an intravenous drip and given antibiotics and pain relief.

“She is lovely—very docile,” caregiver Jenny Shaw told McNaught, “and she already has an admirer. A male koala keeps putting his arms around her. She will need regular attention and it will be a long road to recovery, but she should be able to be released back into the wild in about five months.”



Firefighter David Tree gives water to koala.

Queensland floods

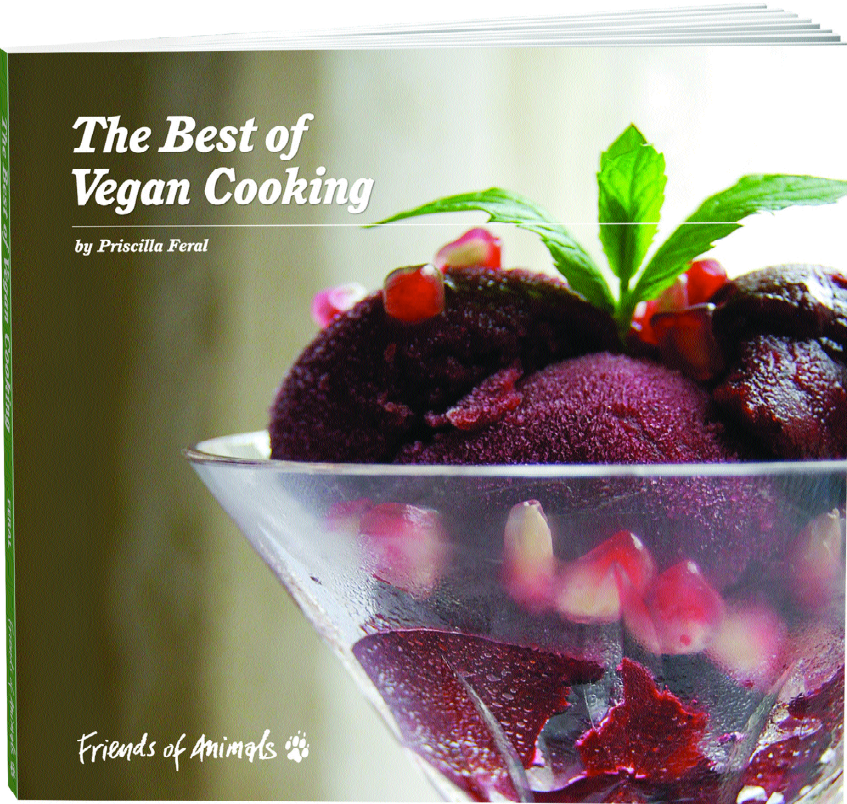
While drought contributed to the devastation in Victoria, Cyclone Ellie on January 31, 2009 and a smaller cyclone that hit a week later caused some of the worst flooding on record in the Gulf of Carpentaria region of northern Queensland.

“Tens of thousands of cattle have been left to starve because owners cannot drop feed to them and state authorities say they are powerless to act,” reported Padraic Murphy of The Australian on February 6. “In many cases, livestock have moved hundreds of kilometres from their stations, which means identifying their owners is difficult. And with much of the area under water, station owners have no feed and many of the animals have been left to die.”

Crocodiles were reported on the streets of Normanton, and a five-foot croc was hit by a car in Townsville but survived with broken teeth and an eye injury, for which he was treated, said the Townsville Bulletin.

Aerial photos showed hundreds of kangaroos huddled on mudbanks. —M.C.

Our Readers Asked For Seconds... Now, Here It Is



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More events

May 2-3: National No-Kill Conference, Washington D.C. Info: <www.no-killconference.org>.

May 16: Bark In The Park, St. Louis. Info: Humane Society of Missouri, 314-647-8800; <www.hsmo.org>.

May 24: American Vegan Society annual meeting & garden party, Malaga, New Jersey. Information: 856-694-2887; <www.americanvegan.org>.

June 13: National Pigeon Day. Info: <www.nationalpigeonday.com>.

June 13: Art for Cats, Seattle. Info: <www.feralcat-project.org/>.

July 12-18: Minding Animals conference, Newcastle, NSW, Australia. Info: <www.mindinganimals.com>.

July 24-27: Taking Action for Animals conf., Washington D.C. Info: <http://taking-actionforanimals.org/>.

July 25: Golf FORE the Animals, to benefit the Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project, Seattle. Info: <www.feralcatproject.org/>.

Sept. 5: Animal Acres Gala, Acton, Calif. Info: 661-269-5404; <info@animal-acres.org>; <www.animal-acres.org/events.html>.

Sept. 24-26: PetSmart Charities Feline Forum, Chicago. Info: <http://petsmartcharities.org/felineforum>.

Nov. 19-21: Middle East Network for Animals conf., Kuwait City, Kuwait. Info: <Ayeshah@-animalfriendskuwait.org>.

November 21: Thankful Turkeys banquet, Animal Acres, Acton, CA. Info: 661-269-5404; <info@animal-acres.org>; <www.animal-acres.org/events.html>.

IF YOUR GROUP IS HOLDING AN EVENT, please let us know—we’ll be happy to announce it here, and we’ll be happy to send free samples of ANIMAL PEOPLE for your guests.





# Nature’s animal control officers

(continued from page 1)

try to chase them. Testing the ability of a chained dog to break loose has some practical survival value for a coyote, but when coyotes who have just had a big meal tease a dog in relays, it is difficult to avoid concluding that what they are doing is mostly a game, done chiefly to impress each other with their bravado.

Despite the occasional ruckus coyotes raise with dogs, humans should appreciate coyotes as extraordinarily quiet and peaceful neighbors. The U.S. coyote population is approximately equal to the domestic dog population. Most Americans, urban as well as rural, live in coyote habitat. Yet except for the brief evening bark and the dinner time barking whirl, usually heard only by people who happen to be outdoors after dark, most Americans seldom have any idea how close coyotes are. Few human neighbors, and for that matter, few animal neighbors, are as good as coyotes about not disturbing humans—even when they raise a litter in the crawl space beneath an occupied house.

## Enforcing laws of nature

Hardly anyone, unfortunately for coyotes, appreciates their increasingly significant role as nature’s animal control officers, or understands that the “laws of nature” they enforce tend to parallel the evolving community expectations of tax-funded animal care and control agencies.

Indeed, coyotes do far more animal control than the public agencies could even begin to, mostly because there are about 250 times more coyotes on the job than there are human animal control officers. Partly because coyotes are on the beat, human animal control officers are able to spend less and less time catching and killing nuisance animals, and more time educating the public to avoid conflict with animals.

But the coyote role as nature’s animal control officers goes well beyond predation on other species, such as feral cats, that may be considered problematic and come under animal control jurisdiction. Indeed, the effects of coyote predation on feral cats is often overstated. Though coyotes are the leading natural predator of feral cats, a variety of studies have found that animal control agency activity still accounts for about half of all verifiable adult feral cat mortality. Roadkills account for up to 25%. Predation, by all wild predators combined, accounts for 10%-20%, depending on the habitat.

Most of the coyote contribution to controlling feral cats, like most of the work of human animal control officers these days, is not lethal to the cats. But coyote “cat control” is lethal to upward of a quarter billion small rodents per year who might otherwise become cat prey, and might thereby feed a growing cat population.

Understanding how much coyotes do to protect human interests begins with understanding what animal control agencies do, on what size budget.

Law enforcement, at all levels combined, annually costs U.S. taxpayers approximately \$220 billion. Barely 1% goes into enforcing animal care and control laws. There are approximately 90 million pet cats and 70 million pet dogs in the U.S., almost a cat per household and a dog for two households out of three. Yet cats, dogs, and all other animals under animal care and control jurisdiction together account for less law enforcement expenditure than the sum of human crime in any one of the biggest 49 U.S. cities.

Animal care and control are woefully underfunded relative to animals’ needs, and always have been. But animal care and control agencies, unlike donation-supported humane societies, exist to serve human needs. U.S. taxpayers tend to perceive that animal care and control agencies at their present levels of funding are mostly keeping animal-related health and safety problems to a tolerable minimum, addressing nuisance issues effectively enough to keep cities livable, and are otherwise remaining acceptably unobtrusive.

This, for animal control officers, requires learning considerable discretion—not unlike the discretion coyotes use



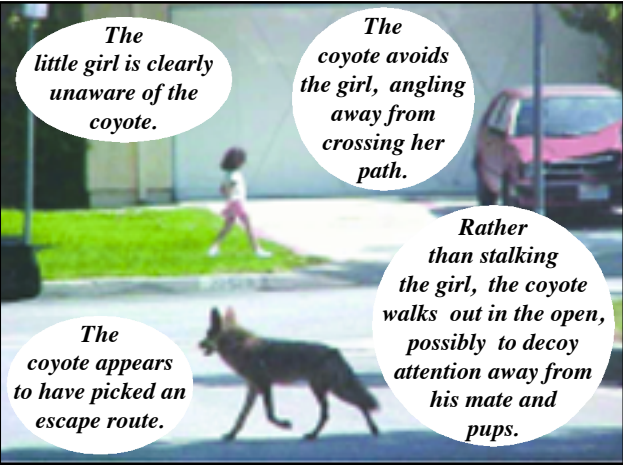
Coyotes at Wildlife Waystation. (Kim Bartlett)

# A misunderstood coyote tries to avoid trouble

Captioned “An urban coyote strolls through West Hills, a suburb of Los Angeles, California, in July 2002,” this photo appears in *Coyote Attacks: An Increasing Suburban Problem*, in which Robert M. Timm, Rex O. Baker, and USDA Wildlife Services employees Joe R. Bennett and Craig C. Coolahan allege that coyotes are losing their fear of humans, and are increasing threats toward humans and pets.

The evidence in the photo, on closer look, tells a different story. The little girl in the background appears to be completely unaware of the coyote, but rather than stalking her, the coyote is not trying to conceal himself. His tail is held low in a submissive or defensive posture. He is not running as if flushed from cover, but is walking in the apparent shadows of trees that may have been cover he has just abandoned. His left ear is cocked toward the photographer.

A reasonable surmise is that this coyote is



**While coyotes and dogs rarely mix on friendly terms, there are exceptions. This pair were pals for years. (Mona Lefebvre)**

in not being seen.

Nationally, almost every community has dog licensing, enforced by animal care and control agencies, yet surveys continue to indicate that not more than 20% of all dogs are licensed. Almost every community has ordinances against allowing dogs and sometimes cats to run at large, has limits on how many pets may be kept, and has some basic care standards, but enforcement tends to be entirely complaint-driven.

If neighbors or other law enforcement agencies do not complain, animal care and control agencies tend to tolerate routine violations. The emphasis is upon enforcing the intent of the ordinances, to prevent specific problems, not upon enforcing every ordinance to the letter—which would be well beyond what any animal control agency has the personnel to do.

Efforts to enforce compliance to the letter of ordinances typically encounter stiff resistance. Aggressive efforts have at times resulted in entire animal control agencies being dismantled, or in animal control service contracts being turned over to other contractors.

The U.S. public likes the idea of dog licensing, especially if noncompliance is used to punish people whose dogs become problematic, but does not like the idea of animal control officers going door to door to check the licensing status of every dog who barks at a stranger.

The public likes the idea of potentially dangerous dogs being removed from communities, but not the idea of benign dogs being impounded and perhaps being killed, if they go unclaimed.

The cartoon stereotype of the dogcatcher long ago became obsolete, as animal control duties expanded, but back when the “Sylvester and Tweety” animated short films and the Walt Disney classic *Lady & The Tramp* (1955) lastingly established the image of dogcatching, between 50 and 60 years ago, animal control officers were mostly still just dogcatchers, whose chief duty was preventing bites and the risk of rabies by picking up strays. As the norms of animal keeping evolved so that fewer people allowed dogs to run at large, free-roaming cats proliferated. By 30 years ago, most U.S. animal control agencies had expanded into capturing cats, as necessity required—but then the norms of cat-keeping shifted too. Between free-roaming pet cats and feral cats, the total number of cats at large is now about the same as it was 60 years ago, just over 30 million, while about two-thirds of all pet cats now live almost entirely indoors.

With the free-roaming dog population reduced to about a tenth of what it was circa 1950, and the outdoor cat population stabilized at well below the peak of about 40 million reached circa 1990, the duties of animal control agencies are shifting again. More and more, animal control agencies are expected to address quality of life as well as public health and safety concerns.

“Barking dog” calls, for example, have climbed from a low priority for most animal control agencies to a priority level that usually results in some response, if only to try to warn the dog’s people against fomenting neighborhood conflict.

Effectively responding to a barking dog complaint typically involves becoming involved in issues formerly left almost entirely to nonprofit humane societies, and addressed almost exclusively—if at all—through humane education. The chronic barking dog is most often a dog who is left chained outdoors in miserable conditions. Stopping the barking requires taking better care of the dog.

Because animal control officers are a branch of law enforcement, the public expects them to be able to invoke laws to reinforce whatever they recommend. Some animal control officers are reluctant to take on the added responsibility of enforcing extensions of authority into new areas, such as anti-chaining ordinances, largely to avoid the risk of being seen as obtrusive—but more and more are putting their influence behind the passage of ordinances prohibiting prolonged chaining, and adding reinforced language about housing animals properly, with adequate food and water.

attempting to decoy the photographer’s attention away from his mate and her pups, who may be hiding in a nearby crawl space, a favorite denning location of urban and suburban coyotes. In July, when the photo was taken, coyote pups would normally still be with their parents.

The coyote is avoiding the girl, angling as sharply as as the geography permits from intersecting with her path. His intent appears to be to go in exactly the opposite direction from the girl, perhaps ducking under the partially visible car parked behind the girl to conceal his escape.

If stalking the girl, the coyote would turn to follow her. If stalking a prey animal taking the same path as the girl, and opting against a direct attack in the open, the coyote would probably cross behind the animal and try to run around the red car parked in the driveway to strike from ambush—but the coyote shows no interest in doing any of this.



Meanwhile, with far fewer dogs and cats at large to hunt wildlife and compete for food and cover, wild animals—including coyotes—have established themselves in urban and suburban habitats. Walt Disney in *A Country Coyote Goes Hollywood* (1967) presciently documented the arrival of coyote prey species, followed by coyotes, but what Disney observed was really just the beginning.

## An ACO testifies for coyotes

Animal care and control agencies today are increasingly involved in responding to nuisance wildlife complaints—like Los Angeles Animal Services, whose wildlife specialist, Greg Randall, stipulates on the agency web site that “We encourage residents to employ deterrents, property alterations and the reduction of wildlife temptations like food, water and shelter, rather than use a pest control company or other methods of trapping, which ultimately is an ineffective way of dealing with the issue.”

Randall explicitly decries “the vilification and persecution of coyotes.”

Unfortunately, many less progressive animal care and control agencies still refer wildlife calls to private exterminators. Wildlife exterminators are today’s counterparts of the for-profit private contractors who did most of the dogcatching back before public animal control agencies were formed. The modus operandi of the dog thieves Horace and Jasper in the 1959 Disney animated feature *101 Dalmatians* was unfortunately all too typical of the for-profit dogcatchers then operating in much of the U.S. and Europe.

Back then, dogcatchers were typically paid by the head for the dogs they nabbed, and made additional money by selling dogs to laboratories, or by selling dog and cat pelts to the fur trade. Many for-profit dogcatchers maximized their revenue by focusing on easily captured pets—and did not do much, at least of a deliberate nature, to encourage people to keep pets at home, or to promote sterilizing pets.

Eliminating for-profit dogcatching proved to be an essential first step toward encouraging more responsible pet-keeping and reducing the numbers of animals who were impounded. Along the way, hundreds of nonprofit humane societies took animal control contracts away from for-profit dogcatchers through competitive bidding. Unfortunately, some humane societies became little more than extermination agencies themselves, leading to the trend of the past 20 years of humane societies turning animal care and control duties over to public agencies, most of them specifically created to do animal care and control as a branch of community law enforcement.

Altogether, replacing for-profit dogcatching with the concept of promoting animal *care* and control as a civic duty took most of the 20th century in the U.S., and is a struggle still underway in most of the world. Dogcatchers in eastern Europe historically made most of their money selling pelts. In India, as recently as 10 years ago, many sold dog leather. For-profit dogcatchers in other parts of Asia still sell dogs for meat.

Despite about 20 years of intensive reform, for-profit dogcatchers worldwide continue to obstruct dog and cat sterilization, vaccination, and the passage of humane laws wherever they can.

A similar problem is increasingly evident in address-  
(continued on page 12)



# Nature’s animal control officers (from page 11)

ing urban wildlife issues. In this regard, the U.S. and global situations are much the same. Private exterminators, and USDA Wildlife Services, the U.S. government-funded extermination agency, often make some superficial effort to teach the public to avoid behavior that invites conflict with wild animals, but at the end of the day they are paid primarily to kill animals. USDA Wildlife Services alone kills more than 2.4 million animals per year, including more than a million birds and—on average—more than 100,000 coyotes. Private exterminators probably kill at least as many more, but no agency formally tracks the numbers.

Most of the coyotes killed by USDA Wildlife Services are killed in rural areas, where they allegedly prey on sheep and calves. Sometimes they do. But often coyotes merely scavenge or dispatch livestock felled by adverse weather or disease, and are mistakenly blamed for causing the deaths of animals who would not have survived long in any event.

The case for tolerating rural coyotes, however, is chiefly ethical and ecological. The case for tolerating urban and suburban coyotes includes undoing human mistakes.

For example, coyotes and raccoons are the two major predators of nonmigratory Canada geese, chiefly through stealing eggs. Hybrids of wild Canada geese and flightless domestic geese, nonmigratory Canada geese were originally bred as hunting decoys. After hunting migratory waterfowl with live decoys was federally banned in 1936, the decoy birds were impounded, bred, and released by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and state wildlife agencies in hopes of rebuilding depleted Canada goose populations to be hunted—but instead the nonmigratory geese demonstrated a distinct preference for habitats with short-cropped grass, such as parks, yards, airports, and ballfields, where hunting is seldom allowed. Among the few species capable of routinely raiding goose nests, coyotes help to keep the grass clean by both limiting the

goose population and restricting the areas in which they can nest successfully.

Deer proliferation is an increasing problem throughout the U.S., a legacy of decades of hunter licensing policy that encouraged hunters to shoot mostly bucks, just after the breeding season. Whether a doe bears twins or a single fawn depends on how much food she finds in early pregnancy. Eliminating male competition for food in early winter brought an exponential increase in twin births, plus a skewed gender balance that would have exponentially increased the deer population even without twinning.

Meanwhile, the number of human hunters in the U.S. fell by half in 20 years. Deer discovered congenial habitat in suburbs where they cannot be safely hunted. Deer/car collisions more than doubled. In some parts of the country deer-eating pumas followed the deer into town. Though pumas attack humans little more often than coyotes, they are the North American mammal species most likely to consume human prey.

Coyotes seldom attack a grown deer, but hunt fawns and scavenge the remains of road-killed deer. Where coyotes are on patrol, even if focused on rabbits, deer tend to keep a discreet distance—at least until the coyotes move on.

Beavers, hunted to the verge of extinction in the 19th century, became a frequent nuisance because humans so often built in flood plains before the beaver population rebounded in the late 20th century—and continue to do so. Few species are more beneficial to other wildlife than beavers, whose dam-building creates habitat for hundreds of other species, especially birds. Beaver dams also contribute significantly to replenishing groundwater, by impounding rain and snow runoff to soak into the soil. But USDA Wildlife Services has killed between 25,000 and 32,000 “nuisance” beavers annually in recent years, and would undoubtedly kill far more if not for coyote predation and the deterrent effect of a coyote presence.



Skeptics may consult the findings of Oregon State University ecologists William Ripple and Robert Beschta, who found that within three years of the Yellowstone National Park wolf reintroduction in 1995, the Yellowstone coyote population plummeted by half, as wolves reclaimed habitat from coyotes, while the beaver population soared by 900%.

Wolves rarely hunt beaver because beaver are too small to feed more than one wolf, but beaver are just the right size to satisfy a coyote family.

## Animal control “service dogs”

Beyond the coyote role in controlling other urban wildlife, coyotes are also in effect animal control agencies’ service dogs in helping to enforce responsible and considerate pet-keeping behavior.

Coyotes do not help to sell pet licences, but much as the mere presence of coyotes helps to keep problematic wildlife from becoming even more abundant in human suburbs, hearing or seeing the occasional coyote helps to encourage pet keepers to avoid allowing cats to wander, chaining dogs outdoors overnight, and leaving pet food outside where it might attract species whose activities bring far more complaints—such as raccoons, skunks, feral pigs, gulls, and crows.

Coyotes, like other wildlife and perhaps most dog-keepers, ignore poop-scooper laws. Yet coyotes consume far more poop than they leave behind, voraciously devouring the nutrient-rich turds left in accessible places by well-fed domestic dogs. Even if coyotes recycle only 1% of the estimated 46 million tons per year left at large by domestic dogs and cats, that would still be 46,000 tons, enough to fill 4,000 dump trucks.

Los Angeles Times reporter Joe Mozingo on January 27, 2009 profiled the work of wildlife exterminator Jimmie Rizzo, 45, who kills coyotes for several southern California cities, beyond the jurisdiction of Los Angeles Animal Services and Los Angeles County Animal Control.

Much and perhaps most of Rizzo’s work appears to be occasioned by complaints from pet keepers about perceived coyote threats to their animals. But the pet keepers are often doing things that animal control and humane officers try to prevent. In one instance, Rizzo came upon “a sobbing man who had let his Doberman out to fight off a coyote who had jumped into the backyard—only to see his pet killed within seconds.”

Basically this man was promoting a dogfight. For the Doberman, the encounter might have been sport. For the much

(continued on page 13)



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# Nature's animal control officers *(from page 13)*

smaller coyote, it was life and death, so the coyote took the first opportunity to finish it.

The coyote complaints that most scare people tend to involve misunderstood or misrepresented behavior. For example, Mozingo reported that Rizzo “has seen coyotes stalking along the 6-foot block walls between homes in Orange County, hunting for pets below.” Actually, such edge habitat is where natural coyote prey such as rabbits, rats, and ground squirrels are most likely to be found in suburbs, in much greater abundance than outdoor pets, and stalking along the top of a wall keeps coyotes out of reach of large dogs—like the Doberman—who might attack them.

A coyote may kill and eat a vulnerable dog or cat of prey size, if able to catch the animal unawares, but like any other predator will not risk injury trying to kill animals who might fight back, such as a cornered cat, hissing and spitting with her fur up. A cat who runs from the coyote might be killed with the same scissors bite that dispatches a rabbit, but if the cat turns on the coyote, as the people of **ANIMAL PEOPLE** have witnessed, the coyote absconds as quickly as possible.

Predators directly confront other species, including humans, either in self-defense, defense of a mate or litter, or in territorial dominance disputes. Because coyotes hunt by stealth, range over large areas, and usually do not maintain territorial exclusivity except in the immediate vicinity of a den with pups, the likelihood of a coyote either seeking or participating in a dominance confrontation is relatively low. A tomcat is much more likely to pick a dominance fight.

Mozingo also described a woman who keeps “a French bulldog named Phoebe.” Phoebe “yips, snorts and wheezes in her rhinestone collar,” Mozingo said.

“We had a cat,” the woman told Mozingo. “He became coyote sushi.”

“She said a pack of coyotes once even chased her when she went out to get the mail one night,” wrote Mozingo.

The missing part of this allegation is a motive. There is no case on record of coyotes making a predatory attack on an adult, and are only a few verified cases of coyotes scavenging the remains of people who were already dead. Why the coyotes took an interest in her is anyone’s guess, but one possibility is that they smelled the woman’s pets’ fur or food on her clothing.

## Misread defensive behavior

Mozingo went on to describe the motivation of a man who lobbied his city council for Rizzo to be hired to kill coyotes. “His family’s dachshunds had already survived two attacks,” Mozingo wrote, “when his mother spotted a coyote in the backyard. She managed to chase it away, but the coyote was intent on the dogs. In the next two days, the family had to run it off three more times. The next afternoon,” the man “looked out an upstairs window to see the same coyote pop up on the wall. He ran downstairs to the patio door. The coyote loped across the yard and leaped over a wall into the neighbor’s property—and, within seconds, was back on the wall. The dachshunds raced at it, barking as it paced along, almost playfully, drawing them to the back of the yard.” The man “dashed to get there, but the coyote pounced. Both dogs sustained deep wounds in their necks and chests...They would survive, but the vet bill would be more than \$3,000.”

This sounds like “aggressive” behavior on the part of the coyote, but again the missing element is the motive. Predators from guppies to great white sharks tend to avoid frontal attacks on prey, which would put themselves at risk, and rarely attack multiple prey animals at once. A coyote who repeatedly attacks two dogs at once, taking the risk of being seen while doing it, is not demonstrating predatory behavior. The coyote might have been rabid, but while rabid coyotes have been found in other parts of the U.S., none have ever been found in California. The series of incidents occurred well outside the usual coyote breeding season, but coyotes sometimes breed out-of-season in warm climates, and one possible explanation is that the coyote was trying to protect a crawl space den containing an out-of-season litter or an injured family member from discovery by the dachshunds.

Jaimee Lynn Fletcher of the *Orange County Register* recently described a superficially similar incident in which a woman let her beagle and an eight-month-old, 13-pound puppy out into her yard one morning. A coyote grabbed the puppy,

but left the pup behind and fled over the fence when the beagle intervened. From Fletcher’s description, the coyote appears to have been hunting in the woman’s yard when the dogs went outside—but a coyote who flees from a beagle, a dog breed usually smaller than an adult coyote, was scarcely there to ambush either dog. Seizing the puppy instead of a rabbit was a “crime of opportunity,” not the result of a wily plot.

## Inappropriate feeding

Pets lost to coyotes are, for the most part, not adequately supervised—like Thomas the cat, whose demise Seattle *Post-Intelligencer* reporter Kery Murakami described in August 2008. Thomas’ people left him outdoors when they went on vacation. When they returned, Murakami wrote, “Thomas was missing... Black and white fur, a 4-inch piece of intestine, and two piles of coyote feces later were found in her yard.”

Thomas’ people complained to Murakami that they had not been warned about coyotes, but coyotes are only one of many reasons why no pet should be left outside to fend for himself or herself while caretakers are away. The most basic may be that there is no way to leave a secure and adequate food supply for the pet, accessible to the pet but not to other animals.

This is a lesson that people practicing neuter/return of feral cats have also struggled with. Feeding feral cat colonies is necessary in order to trap them for sterilization and vaccination, and also in order to count and keep track of them later, to identify any non-sterilized and unvaccinated newcomers.

However, encouraging feral cats to rely on human feeding is in effect turning them into outdoor pets. They may never become tame enough to touch, but as they become more accustomed to human feeders, they will become more visible as well, and therefore more likely to attract the notice of people who do not want them to be wherever they are—especially people who worry about cat predation on birds.

This is not unreasonable. Cats who hunt for a living tend to hunt mice, at night, not birds, who are mostly not out at night. Studies of feral cat hunting habits tend to show that birds are barely on the menu in mainland habitats, where mice are accessible. Outdoor pet cats, however, hunt for sport, not food. About 10% hunt birds successfully, and among those cats, birds may account for about 15% of their total prey.

Meanwhile, leaving food out at night for feral cats who will not eat by day may attract raccoons, skunks, opossums, and foxes, as well as coyotes, who also raid birds’ nests—but where cats are seen, they usually take the blame.

Coyotes in July 2008 took a key role in brokering a truce between birders and feral cat colony caretakers at California State University Long Beach, simply by being seen near the cat food. Explained Long Beach *Press-Telegram* staff writer Kevin Butler, “A report by the California Department of Fish and Game found that the primary attraction for coyotes on the CSULB campus was the food and water at the cat feeding stations. The cats themselves are a secondary food source for the coyotes, according to agency officials.”

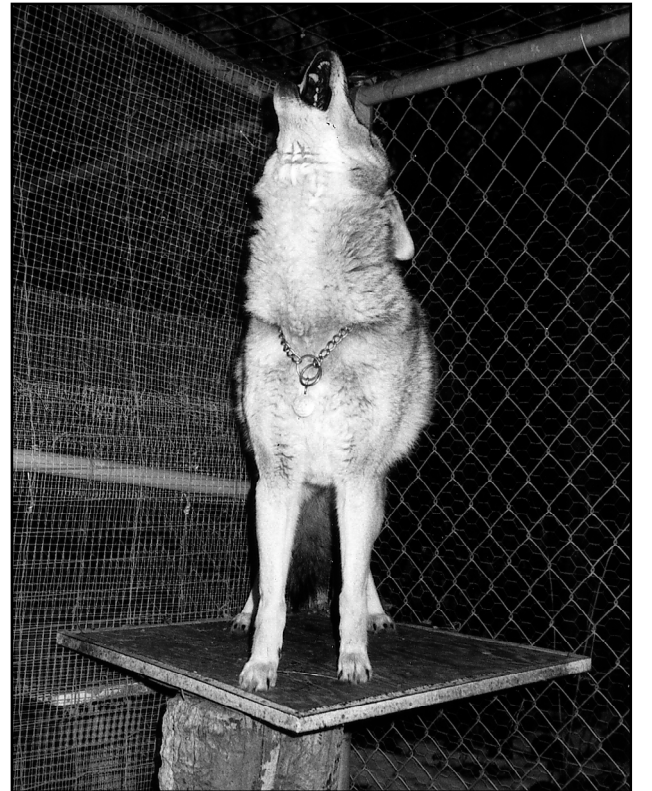
Initially CSULB sought to evict the coyotes by evicting the cats. Upon realizing that leaving food out overnight for cats was drawing coyotes who also ate cats, the cat colony caretakers accepted a new feeding regimen designed to minimize conflict with wildlife.

Though often dismayed to lose cats to coyotes, after investing in sterilization surgery for the cats and developing emotional bonds to them, neuter/return practitioners tend to accept that cats who live as wildlife usually die as wildlife.

As obligate carnivores, cats are close kin to apex predators such as lions and tigers, but due to their size, have also evolved the fecundity and large litters of a prey species. Dispatch by a larger predator is a normal and natural fate for a feral cat at about the point in life when an indoor pet might begin to need dental care; the fear-some armament of a young, healthy cat was not designed by nature to last half as long as many indoor cats survive.

People who allow their pet cats to roam outdoors often take a less accepting view of nature—especially coyotes. Coyote predation on roaming pet cats has produced demands that coyotes be killed in at least two dozen U.S. and Canadian cities during the past four years, according to the **ANIMAL PEOPLE** archives.

The hue and cry appears to have escalated



*Allowed to roam freely, Zuni never took the opportunity to return to the life of a wild coyote, but maintained friendships with many wild kin. He liked to howl beneath a tin roof that amplified his song. (Mona Lefebvre)*

since a coyote on July 1, 2005 killed one of three “outdoor cats” kept by Janice Webster, of Vancouver, British Columbia. Her 42-page screed *Missing Cats, Stray Coyotes: One Citizen’s Perspective* recently appeared in the Proceedings of the 12th Wildlife Damage Management Conference, hosted by the Wildlife Damage Management Working Group of The Wildlife Society—even though Webster did not present the paper at the conference, and some Wildlife Society members who did present papers are apparently flabbergasted that it was published.

Much of the Webster paper refutes exaggerated estimates of cat predation on birds. Her context, however, is alleging that the “Co-Existing With Coyotes” program in effect in Vancouver since 1994 is part of a *defacto* plot against cats by cat-hating birders and conservation biologists—omitting the reality that some of the leading advocates of “Co-Existing With Coyotes” are also advocates of feral cats and neuter/return.

“Cities are not for the Third Worldness of the Wild Kingdom,” Webster concludes, equating appreciation of urban coyotes with “an extinction-of-humans death-wish religion where one accepts, even welcomes, wildlife attacks on people and pets.”

*(continued on page 14)*

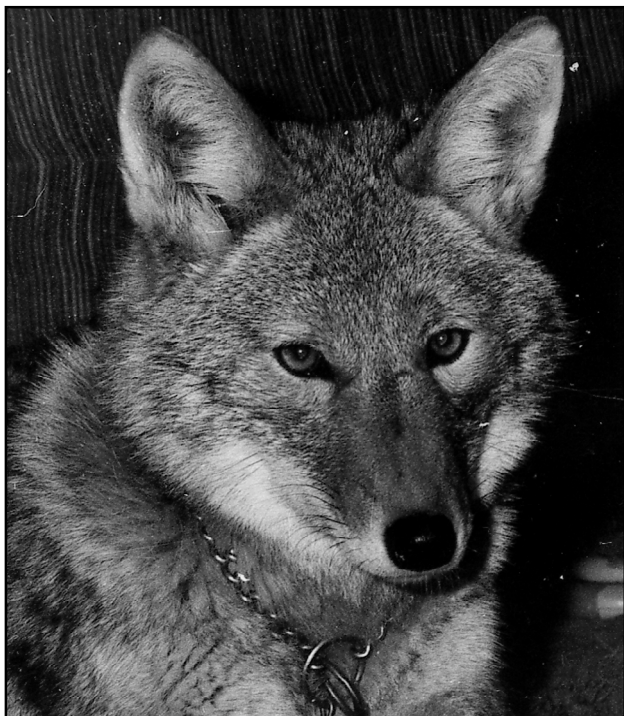
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*Zuni, long deceased, was longtime companion to the late Mona Lefebvre, a semi-recluse who lived in rural Kansas.*



# Nature’s animal control officers (from page 13)

## “Hide behind the children”

Webster’s argument for extirpating coyotes from urban and suburban habitat might be summarized as, “Hide behind the children.”

Humans, like most other animals, have a primal fear of predation, and respond especially quickly and intensely to a perceived threat of predation against offspring.

Discussing how fear tends to trump knowledge in a crisis, in any species, livestock handling expert Temple Grandin cites brain scan studies showing that the fight-or-flight response, when activated, may literally switch off neurons that might be engaged in a more rational analysis, and might cause the animal, or human, to hesitate instead of taking action.

This is apparently most likely to happen in encounters with predators, both actual and imagined, and happens more-or-less the same way in every species that has been tested.

Thus Robert M. Timm, Rex O. Baker, and USDA Wildlife Services employees Joe R. Bennett and Craig C. Coolahan have since 2004 alarmed much of the public with a paper entitled *Coyote Attacks: An Increasing Suburban Problem*. Timm, Baker, et al allege in the paper that coyotes are losing their fear of humans, and are increasingly dangerous toward humans and pets. According to their findings, the first reported coyote attack on a human in California that was not attributed to rabies occurred in 1978. During the next 25 years, coyotes allegedly attacked people or pets in the presence of people 89 times. More than 75% of the incidents came after 1994. In 35 incidents, coyotes allegedly stalked or attacked young children. In 1981 a coyote killed a three-year-old Glendale girl. That incident remains the only human fatality caused by a wild coyote in U.S. history.

According to Timm, Baker, et al, “There is a predictable sequence of observed changes in coyote behavior that indicates an increasing risk to human safety. We define these changes, in order of their usual pattern of occurrence, as follows: 1) An increase in observing coyotes on streets and in yards at night; 2) An increase in coyotes approaching adults and/or taking pets at night; 3) Early morning and late afternoon daylight observance of coyotes on streets and in parks and yards; 4) Daylight observance of coyotes chasing or taking pets; 5) Coyotes attacking and taking pets on leash or in close proximity to their owners; coyotes chasing joggers, bicyclists, and other adults; 6) Coyotes seen in and around children’s play areas, school grounds, and parks in mid-day; 7) Coyotes acting aggressively toward adults during mid-day.”

As Timm, Baker, et al continue, “A number of cities and states have adopted this sequence of behaviors...for determining an appropriate action threshold to implement coyote control measures. In many localities that use such a system, removal of problem coyotes is initiated when coyote behavior progresses to steps 4 or 5.”

But coyotes, like other predators who hunt by stealth, are seldom seen when they don’t want to be seen, or don’t imagine themselves to be unobserved. Seeing coyotes more often may only mean more cases of male coyotes trying to decoy humans or animals, usually dogs, who may be close to female coyotes and young.

Coyotes “approaching adults and/or taking pets at night,” “Daylight observance of coyotes chasing or taking pets,” “Coyotes attacking and taking pets on leash or in close proximity to their owners,” and “Coyotes acting aggressively toward adults during mid-day” all may likewise be defensive

behavior, especially if the confrontation is frontal and results from a surprise encounter. Frontal confrontations are neither stalking pray, nor picking a fight, if the encounter was unanticipated. Many species in such situations may growl and make threatening gestures, trying to avoid being attacked. Coyotes—and foxes—are also well known for their efforts to bluff and decoy to buy time for mates and pups to escape.

Neither are sightings of coyotes “in and around children’s play areas, school grounds, and parks in mid-day” inherently of concern, since many playgrounds, schools, and parks are places where a coyote might reasonably go to hunt rabbits. Toddlers might be at risk from an especially hungry coyote, but the sum of cases in which coyotes appear to have tried to prey upon human children—ever—is far fewer than the annual sum of cases in which domestic dogs kill children.

In the 28 years since the one fatal coyote attack on a child occurred, pet dogs have made life-threatening attacks on 1,275 children and 753 adults, killing 318 people. Pit bull terriers alone attacked 568 children and 457 adults, killing 132 of their victims. Rottweilers attacked 251 children, 113 adults, and killed 66 victims.

## Coyotes misread humans, too

But if coyotes really are “nature’s animal control officers,” shouldn’t they be no threat at all to people and pets who are trying to mind their own business?

Compare the coyote record to the record of human law enforcement officers. During the past decade, vehicular accidents resulting from police pursuits of suspects have reportedly killed an average of about 400 people per year, injuring about 2,000. Of the fatalities, about half are the suspects, a third are uninvolved people who happen to be in the way, and the remainder are police officers themselves.

Every year, in other words, police pursuits kill as many innocent people as pit bull terriers have killed in 28 years, and kill as many police officers as the toll from Rottweilers. A police officer chasing a suspect is at least 50 times more likely to kill or injure a child as a coyote is to even nip a finger.

That police make mistakes, at times catastrophic, is generally understood and accepted. For coyotes, any mistake tends to be fatal to themselves—and fatal, as well, to every other coyote in the vicinity where someone decides coyotes are “losing the fear of humans” and therefore must be killed.

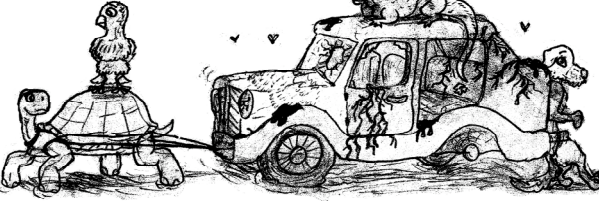
Sometimes coyotes do misread human intent, as appears to have occurred in two of the most recent alleged coyote attacks on adults.

In the first, on November 15, 2008, patrolman Gene Bettencourt of Beverly, Massachusetts, “gunned his cruiser between a woman and a rapidly charging coyote to prevent the animal from attacking her in St. Mary’s Cemetery,” reported *Salem News* staff writer Paul Leighton.

“Bettencourt said he was on routine patrol in St. Mary’s Cemetery,” wrote Leighton, “when a man walking his dog told him he saw a ‘huge animal’...As Bettencourt called the police station to report the coyote sighting, a woman got out of a green van and walked toward a gravestone. The coyote then took off and started running toward the woman.”

The missing point of information is that coyotes (and foxes) often hunt and den for the night in cemeteries, which tend to be among the quietest locations in urban and suburban neighborhoods. The coyote may have been inadvertently flushed from cover by the man with the dog—and then the woman’s arrival compounded the coyote’s sense of threat.

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Concluded Leighton, “Bettencourt said the coyote stopped about 40 to 50 feet away when he pulled his cruiser in front of the woman.”

A coyote, fox, wolf, or even a feral cat will typically take a perceived opportunity to better assess a pursuer, and see what is becoming of companions or family members, if any are also at risk from a surprise encounter.

In the second case, on January 15, 2009, a three-year-old yellow Labrador named Rufus was lauded as a hero for rousting two coyotes who allegedly attacked Amanda Denison, 26, as she tossed a Frisbee to the dog in a greenbelt at about 7:00 a.m.—barely past dawn. One of the coyotes was later shot by a Colorado Division of Wildlife employee.

“The whole story didn’t make the news,” University of Colorado animal behavior scientist Marc Bekoff told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**. “When Denison noticed the coyotes, she called to them to join in the game, thinking they were dogs. The two coyotes approached and the larger one put her wrist in his mouth. She jerked it out of his mouth, tearing her coat.

“I’ve studied coyotes for more than 35 years,” Bekoff continued, “and I know them well. I think it’s highly likely that the coyote who nipped her was merely trying to join the game to which he’d been invited. It’s also possible the coyotes were looking for a handout. Golfers in Erie, less than a half mile north, had been inviting coyotes to share their sandwiches with them. Most ‘attacks’ have been by individuals who have been fed or otherwise welcomed into the local community or as in this case, invited to play a game with a dog.

“We just can’t invite animals into our homes after we’ve invaded their homes,” Bekoff said, “and then kill them when we no longer want them around.

Coyotes are not “angel doggies,” blessed with supernatural insight into how to handle every situation. Yet coyotes’ mistakes harming humans are astonishingly few, considering their numbers and proximity to us, while human mistakes harming coyotes occur by the dozens every day.

—Merritt Clifton

## Impeachment of Illinois governor did not surprise SHARK

**SPRINGFIELD, Illinois**—When the Illinois Senate impeached governor Rod Blagojevich for abuse of power on January 29, 2009, by a vote of 59-0, Showing Animals Respect & Kindness founder Steve Hindi could say “I told you so.” Hindi had accused the Blagojevich administration of corruption via the SHARK web site since July 2006.

Hindi fingered Blagojevich himself and senior officials at the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the Illinois State Police, and the office of the Illinois State’s Attorney after they refused to prosecute cruelty to animals captured on videotape by SHARK investigators at the 2006 Illinois High School Rodeo Association finals in Springfield, the Illinois state capital.

“The abuse included extensive use of the electric prod. Animals were secretly stuck with sharp wires and other pointed objects. Calves were jerked down. Small goats were run over by 1,200-pound horses,” Hindi recounted, “in an event called ‘Goat Tying,’ in which a girl on a galloping horse approaches a tethered goat. She jumps off the horse, throws the tethered goat down, and ties his legs. It’s a little like tackling someone who is already in handcuffs.

“Besides the abuse of bucking straps, intense spurring, and regular use of electric prods,” Hindi continued, “horses were regularly hit in the face to make them exit the chutes. Sand was deliberately thrown in the eyes of some animals. Twisting and pulling tails, explicitly banned by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, was allowed. Not surprisingly, there were plenty of injuries among the victims.”

Hindi thought SHARK had ample evidence to support criminal charges. The Springfield *State Journal-Register* editorialists, cartoonist, and staff writer Bruce Rushton appeared to be convinced, even though the *State Journal-Register* co-sponsored the rodeo. But no charges were filed. “Please contact Governor Blagojevich’s office,” Hindi urged. “The crooks in Illinois government won’t do the right thing, at least not without a lot of help from us.”

Hindi recalled that “In 2000 a spokesperson for then-governor George Ryan suggested that I was an ‘extreme activist’ when we demanded action against the high school rodeo thugs. The governor tried to paint me, and by associa-

tion SHARK, as criminals. George Ryan has since been indicted, tried and convicted of corruption in federal court,” receiving a six-year prison sentence for graft.

Blagojevich was impeached 18 days after New Mexico governor Bill Richardson declined to pursue nomination to become U.S. Secretary of Commerce, because, Richardson said, “a pending investigation of a company that has done business with New Mexico state government...would have forced an untenable delay in the confirmation process.”

“Like Blagojevich, Richardson is a big supporter of rodeo,” Hindi recalled, whose efforts “to try to make rodeo the official sport of New Mexico” cost taxpayers as much as \$16 million in state funding and tax incentives.

Blagojevich and Richardson are only two of the biggest names among prominent rodeo backers and promoters whom SHARK has recently “outed” for alleged unethical acts going beyond those in the arena. Another was former Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association commissioner Troy Ellerman, who in 2007 lost the job and his license to practice law, and drew a 30-month prison sentence for leaking grand jury testimony in connection with the ongoing BALCO steroids abuse case involving numerous major league baseball players.

Hindi argues that receiving peer approval for abusing animals in the rodeo ring helps to condition rodeo performers to handle human relationships in a similar manner.

Cases detailed at the SHARK web site include those of former pro bull riders Zeb Lanham and Billy Ray Byrd. Lanham, 24, of Sweet, Idaho, pleaded guilty on December 21, 2008 to felony domestic violence, after battering his pregnant girlfriend on November 3, 2008. Byrd in May 2004 shot his wife, 11 days after she won a temporary restraining order against him for alleged domestic violence. She survived. Byrd drew 16 years in prison for multiple related offenses.

While researching the SHARK postings, Hindi and SHARK colleagues Janet Enoch and Michael Kobliska learned that cases of sexual predation on minors by rodeo sponsors and instructors appear to be at least as frequent as cases brought against performers for violent acts. They posted details of several recent convictions and other cases still before courts.

## India high court halts bullfights

**NEW DELHI**—The Supreme Court of India on January 30, 2009 reaffirmed a July 2007 ruling that public “bull-taming” exercises called *jallikattu* are illegal, and that *jallikattu* events held under a limited exemption granted in January 2008 did not meet the Supreme Court-imposed condition that cruelty to the bulls must be prevented.

Traditionally held during Pongal season festivals, chiefly in Tamil Nadu state, *jallikattu* includes bullock cart races, bullfights, and participatory torment of bulls similar to the mob attacks on bulls practiced at festivals in parts of Spain, Latin America, and South Africa.

Acting on a motion by Animal Welfare Board of India senior advocate K K Venugopal, Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan and Justice P. Sathasivam issued a restraining order against further *jallikattu* during the 2009 Pongal season, after 21 people were killed and at least 1,614 were injured in January 2009 *jallikattu* events. They extended the order on February 13. The Supreme Court is to rule on the Animal Welfare Board’s request for a permanent injunction against *jallikattu* later in 2009.

“We don’t want to stop bull fighting completely as it attracts tourism,” Chief Justice Balakrishnan advised, according to J. Venkatesan of *The Hindu*, but the Chief Justice added “We can’t allow violent activities.”

One week after the Supreme Court issued the restraining order against *jallikattu*, Member of Parliament Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco of Curtorim, Goa introduced a bill to exempt fights between bulls, called *dhirio*, from the federal Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The Supreme Court ruled in 1998 that the 1960 law forbids *dhirio*, but as many as 120 illegal *dhirio* fights were held in 2008, according to *The Times of India*.

The most blatant such case allegedly occurred in an improvised bull ring during a festival at Hueytalpan, Puebla state, Mexico, on November 29, 2008. Master of ceremonies Leonardo Julian Hidalgo was reportedly charged with corrupting minors and public indecency for inducing two boys, 12 and 13, to strip in front of the crowd for rewards of about \$11 U.S.





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## *USDA probes claim that saliva test can reduce post-mortem rabies tests*

**AMES, Iowa**—A company called Dyne Immune created web buzz on February 3, 2009 that a new saliva test to detect rabies might end the need to confirm suspected cases through post-mortem examination—but the enthusiasm expressed by rescuers without veterinary background was not shared by rabies experts. **ANIMAL PEOPLE** learned within minutes of receiving the Dyne Immune announcement and making inquiries.

"No more killing an animal just in case!" exulted one poster to an online discussion group.

"We have major concerns," responded U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention rabies program director Charles Rupprecht.

Explained Chulalongkorn University professor Henry Wilde, "We had a colleague here in Thailand who also tried to develop a saliva test for dogs. We spent considerable effort to show that even if this test is specific and sensitive, it is unreliable. Rabies virus excretion in saliva is not consistent but intermittent, and may be absent at any time during the clinical illness. It seems incredible," Wilde said, "that such a product has apparently reached the market in the United States. If it is used at all in an effort to make a post-exposure treatment decision, it could lead to deaths and visits by many attorneys."

Wilde immediately forwarded the Dyne Immune media release and further information from the Dyne Immune web site to an international panel of distinguished rabies researchers, all of whom noted the risk of using a test which may produce a false negative finding—appearing to clear a rabid animal of suspicion of infection.

"This test for rabies antigen in saliva is generating a substantial amount of controversy for a number of reasons," e-mailed Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine rabies laboratory director Cathleen Hanlon. "Since it is a veterinary diagnostic test, it would most likely be under the regulation of the USDA. I will check with my contact at USDA to clarify whether it is simply experimental at this point rather than 'approved' per se by regulatory authorities."

"We have been in contact with Dyne Immune and have opened an investigation of Rabies RAPID Screen," disclosed Laurier P. Couture of USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service Center for Veterinary Biologics on February 5, 2009. "If you or any of your contacts could provide us with additional information concerning this product or its use we would appreciate it."

We are especially interested in obtaining an actual kit or kit circular from the field."

The excitement started after the Dyne Immune media release reached online newsgroups including AR-News, opening with a place line of Florence, Kentucky, and concluding with an upstate New York telephone number. The release also appeared on web sites where lay people discuss health issues, but was not posted to ProMed, the peer-reviewed International Society for Infectious Diseases e-list for public health professionals, nor to other mailing lists serving people who work in rabies prevention.

Claimed Dyne Immune chief executive officer V. James DeFranco, M.D., "This test can reduce the number of animals destroyed and save doctors and animal control organizations from the costs associated with traditional testing."

But how a test known to produce false negatives can save animals' lives was left unclear. If a test produces false positives, retesting positive outcomes to make sure can

be made a routine part of the testing procedure. Confirmation of a positive finding of rabies could then be taken as confirmation that the animal should be euthanized. But if a negative finding does not exclude the possibility of rabies, then no amount of repetition could ensure that the animal is not infected.

The Dyne Immune web site included a disclaimer, acknowledging that "A negative result does not guarantee that rabies is not present. The screen produces a positive result to killed rabies virus in non-human mammalian saliva," the web site explained. "Results are not quantitative."

The Dyne Immune test is "Not suitable for screening the rabies virus in humans at this time," the site added.

"So that you can get to know Dyne Immune a little bit better," the site offered, "we are inviting qualified professionals to try out and evaluate a Rabies RAPID Screen, free of charge."

The site provided details of a single trial of the product, on a suspected rabid kitten

at the Warwick Valley Humane Society in Warwick, New York. Involved in the trial, representing Dyne Immune, were Gary Monteith, who was identified on the Dyne Immune web site as "an expert in animal husbandry," and Michael Huchital, a biochemist.

Huchital circa 1990 started a business called Quality Antisera Development & Production. He employed Monteith, who was identified in USDA documents as "a rabbit handler."

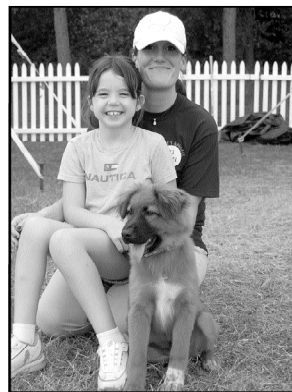
Cited in 1997 for alleged multiple violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act, Huchital was in March 1999 fined \$1,200 by administrative law judge James W. Hunt.

The USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service appealed the verdict. Judicial officer William G. Jenson in November 1999 found additional Animal Welfare Act violations, and increased the fine to \$3,750.

Jurisdictional issues raised by the case are often cited in other Animal Welfare Act enforcement decisions.

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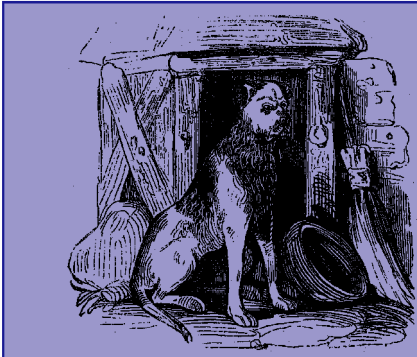
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# The Watchdog

The Watchdog monitors fundraising, spending, and political activity in the name of animal and habitat protection—both pro and con. His empty bowl stands for all the bowls left empty when some take more than they need.

## Endowment restrictions causes Massachusetts SPCA to close three shelters

**BOSTON**—Downsizing for the second time in five years, the Massachusetts SPCA on February 5, 2009 announced the closure of shelters in Brockton, Martha’s Vineyard, and Springfield, effective May 1. Thirty-eight staff will be laid off and eight vacant positions will be eliminated.

The MSPCA will continue to operate shelters and animal hospitals in Boston, Centerville, Methuen, and Nantucket.

MSPCA spokesperson Brian Adams told media that any animals who are not adopted from the Brockton, Martha’s Vineyard, and Springfield shelters before they close will be transferred to the shelters that remain open.

But that left unanswered who will shelter animals in the parts of Massachusetts that the MSPCA will no longer serve. The MSPCA—which for most of the 20th century had a shelter in Pittsfield as well as Springfield—will no longer have any presence in the western part of the state.

The shelter closings came after animal surrenders to the MSPCA soared from 574 in 2007 to 836 in 2008, coinciding with the onset of the present national economic slump. Altogether, the Springfield shelter handled about 6,000 animals in 2008, and the Brockton and Martha’s Vineyard shelters handled about 5,000 between them.

### Service gap

“There just aren’t other facilities that can bear the burden of thousands of animals in need of shelter,” acknowledged Springfield MSPCA spokesperson Candy Lash to Patrick Johnson of the *Springfield Republican*.

The Thomas J. O’Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center in Springfield received 4,000 animals in 2008, executive director Barbara L. Hays told Peter Goonan of the *Springfield Republican*, and accepts animals only from Springfield plus four suburbs. Hays was earlier warned to expect a \$96,000 budget cut, due to reduced state aid to cities, and expected to lay off three workers.

“It’s terrifying right now, not only from an animal lovers view, but for public health,” Hays told Goonan. “There are not enough resources in the area to handle the number of dogs, cats, and other animals in need of shelter and adoption,” Hays said.

Springfield mayor Dominic J. Sarno said that the animal control budget cut “may need to be revisited,” reported Goonan.

The next largest shelter serving the Springfield area, the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society, keeps a waiting list for incoming animals, and houses just 10 dogs and 40 cats. “Last year, Dakin placed about 1,300 animals, with 1,100 being cats and kittens,” wrote Goonan. “This included 300 cats and kittens from the MSPCA adoption center.”

The MSPCA had operated in Springfield since 1933, in Brockton since 1945, and in Martha’s Vineyard since 1947. The current Martha’s Vineyard shelter opened in 1989, the present Brockton shelter in 1993, and the present Springfield shelter in 1996.

Martha’s Vineyard shelter director Ronald Whitney, a 31-year MSPA employee, is looking into founding a locally administrat-

ed humane society, he told Sam Bungey of the *Vineyard Gazette*. The new organization might lease the MSPCA property.

Anna Bell Washburn, 82, who led the eight-year fundraising campaign that built the present Martha’s Vinyard shelter, told **ANIMAL PEOPLE** that MSPCA president Carter Luke gave her advance notice of the closure. Washburn said she hoped that a new charity can take over and run the shelter, but added that she could do little more to help. “I can’t pick up the torch again,” Washburn said.

### Falling assets

A freeze on hiring and administrative salaries was already in effect before the shelter closures were decided upon, Luke told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**. “About the only words that come to my mind,” Luke said, “are what I am feeling— heartbreaking, gut-wrenching, devastating, a horrible terrible ache, etc. etc.”

Ascending to the presidency in June 2006, Luke served in various capacities under every MSPCA president since Eric H. Hansen, the fourth president of the 141-year-old organization, who was hired in 1942. MSPCA founder George Angell served from 1868 until his death in 1909. His chosen successor, Francis Rowley, served for 25 years.

Luke said the MSPCA lost more than \$11.5 million in assets in 2008, amounting to 26% of its endowment.

The term “endowment” is used by charities to describe financial assets held in reserve. Older and larger charities typically hold endowments built from bequests. Often they invest the interest and dividends from their endowments in fundraising from the public, so that endowment income is in effect the engine driving their operations. When endowments become especially large, endowment income may also underwrite program service.

Still among the 10 wealthiest humane societies worldwide, the MSPCA laid off 20 people and eliminated 32 vacant positions in 2003, soon after Luke’s predecessor Larry Hawk was hired away from his previous post as president of the American SPCA. The MSPCA financial assets had already declined by about a third from their peak value.

“For years the MSPCA has been violating its own spending policy by bypassing limits on the percentage of endowment gains that may be used to pay operating expenses,” reported Sacha Pfeiffer of the *Boston Globe* when Hawk departed.

The \$6 million Springfield facility proved to be much bigger than the community was willing to support. Luke closed the MSPCA veterinary hospital in Springfield in 2007, but kept the adoption center open.

“Springfield is a complex situation,” Luke told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**. “We’re in a building that is two-thirds empty, and costs a lot of money to occupy. We lose \$1 million a year in Springfield, and are still paying off a debt there. Some time ago, discussions began in Springfield about combining resources. There is another shelter in the community, and another non-profit. So the discussions are happening now, urgently. We’ll help as much as we can. Something new may come out of it.”

The gist of the crisis, Luke said, is that “We spend more money than we make. We fill the gap with income generated from our endowment. In 2008, we thought we’d generate about \$3.5 million to fund our programs,” but instead the endowment losses and the shortfall in expected revenue produced an operating loss of \$15 million.

### Endowment rules

“A key issue,” Luke explained, “is that nearly 70% of our endowment is permanently restricted, so we can’t touch the principle at all. And no matter what happens to the investments, or how much they lose, we cannot,” by state law, “allow the principle of our permanent endowment to fall below its initial value. So all losses to our endowment become unrestricted cash losses. In other words, 30% of our endowment,” the unrestricted portion, “has to cover 100% of the losses,” to keep the permanent endowment “intact and full. So we’ve run into a cash flow situation that requires that we very quickly balance our income and expenses.

“I don’t think anyone is assuming that there will be any significant income off any investments this year,” Luke added. “In the future, once things turn around, it will be a smaller pool. We had to make difficult and very painful choices.”

“Gift-spending restrictions on non-profits were enacted across the country in the 1970s,” clarified *Wall Street Journal* reporters John Hechinger and Jennifer Levitz. “State legislators passed a raft of rules that let charities—which traditionally favored bonds—put their savings in stocks and other growth-oriented investments. But a key proviso protected an institution’s long-term health: An endowment couldn’t spend a dime if a gift fund fell below its initial dollar value.”

Since early 2007, Hechinger and Levitz wrote, 26 states have eased restrictions on the use of endowments.

“In Massachusetts,” they said, “the repeal effort is led by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, whose endowment lost 28% in 2008, ending the year at \$85 million. More than a third of the 265 gift funds that make up the Massachusetts Audubon endowment can’t be tapped for spending.”

### Pennsylvania SPCA

Under media scrutiny after making unpopular budget cuts, Pennsylvania SPCA chief executive officer Howard Nelson resigned “due to health reasons and an environment no longer conducive to my success or the success of the organization” in a February 11, 2009 e-mail to the PSPCA board. By February 13 the “resignation” had become an indefinite leave of absence.

The PSPCA in January 2008 closed its former shelter in Clarion County, and closed its Monroe County shelter in Stroudsburg at the end of January 2009.

Said a Pennsylvania SPCA press release, “The PSPCA board of directors cited a lack of community support, the bad economy, poor support from the local media, and inability to hire staff and managers that met the

organization’s high standards of care as reasons why the decision was made to close the shelter. All animals remaining at the shelter will be taken to the PSPCA’s Philadelphia Adoption Center.”

The PSPCA said that Monroe County direct costs for 2008 were about \$350,000. Revenue from fees and donations was about \$225,000.

Monroe County Vector/Litter Control director Jacquelyn Hakim told *Pocono Record* staff writer Beth Brelje that the shelter closure would leave a “dangerous void,” Brelje wrote. “The rabies threat alone from unvaccinated feral cats makes this a public health problem,” Hakim said. “We need a trap-neuter-vaccinate-release program here in Monroe County and we needed it yesterday.”

The Monroe County PSPCA shelter had changed directors four times in 19 months, reported Brelje. Barbara Balsama, the director for nearly 20 years, exited in June 2007, after months of friction with present PSPCA executive director Howard Nelson. Nelson in March 2007 succeeded Erik Hendricks, the PSPCA executive director for 27 years.

The PSPCA complaint about local media appeared to be directed at Brelje, who has handled the *Pocono Record* humane beat since 2007. In September 2008 Brelje covered the resignation of Doylestown attorney Richard H. Elliot from the PSPCA board, after Elliot had served as volunteer and board member for 44 years. On December 21, 2008 Brelje published a three-part exploration of controversies about PSPCA law enforcement and euthanasia methods under Nelson.

E-mailed Nelson to the *Pocono Record*, “I do hope you highlight the *Record*’s success and important part in getting this shelter closed.”

Hendricks took a different view. “I would suspect this is a sad result of the general economic malaise,” he told Brelje. “At one time, the PSPCA had six shelters. They were all carried by donations in Philadelphia.”

The Monroe County shelter was partially subsidized by income of about \$72,000 a year from the Ryman Foundation, created by the estate of a Monroe County resident. That funding “was left for the operation of a shelter in Monroe County and must be used for that purpose,” Nelson told the *Pocono Record*.

### Oasis to close

Eddie Lama, cofounder of the Oasis Sanctuary in Callicoon Center, New York, also announced impending closure, after 10 years of operation and five years of falling donations, after the 2004 death of founding partner Eddie Rizzo.

“Lama began rescuing animals after doing time in state prison, where he met Rizzo,” wrote Victor Whitman of the Middletown *Times Herald-Record*. “He and Rizzo started FaunaVision,” the nonprofit umbrella for the Oasis Sanctuary, “driving around New York City in a multimedia van,” airing video about animal issues.

Their work was the subject of a 1999 video, *The Witness*, often aired at animal rights events in the next several years.

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## Top 100 Birding Sites of the World

by **Dominic Couzens**

Univ. of Calif. Press (2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94704-1012), 2008. 320 pages, illustrated. \$45.00.



Just a year after publication of the first edition of Dominic Couzens' *Top 100 Birding Sites of the World*, now reprinted in an expanded edition, climatic change has transformed three of the ten I have been fortunate enough to visit.

Keoladeo Ghana National Park at Bharatpur, India, is badly depleted by drought, though the Indian government hopes to restore it by piping in water.

The Florida Everglades, also drying out, are now home to increasingly abundant feral pythons. The pythons prey upon the resident alligators, who are the major predators of Everglades wading birds. Since big snakes have consumed crocodilians in most crocodilians habitat for the past hundred million years, the only surprise is that big snakes of some sort didn't reach the Everglades sooner.

The Olympic Peninsula, just a ferry boat ride from here, is gaining bird species due to global warming. Of 305 North American bird species, 177 now winter farther north than they did in 1968, according to the National Audubon Society.

Though habitats evolve, most of Couzens' top 100 birding sites are likely to remain spectacular for birders regardless of changes in the species lists they host.

"My first response after reading *Top 100 Birding Sites of the World*," testifies back cover blurb author John T. Rotenberry, "was to reach for the phone and start booking tours to go see birds."

Probably most readers of this wish-book will have a similar impulse, but most will never in a lifetime save the spare change or flyer miles to visit more than a few dozen of Couzens' top 100, distributed as they are among seven continents and several remote Pacific islands. Only a few are close enough together to conveniently visit on the same trip.

Enough are easily accessible, however, to enable almost any reader to visit a few, enhancing imagination of what the rest must be like.

—Merritt Clifton

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## American Coyote: *Still Wild at Heart*

30-minute documentary by **Melissa Peabody**

Distributed by Project Coyote, a program of Earth Island Institute, c/o P.O. Box 5007, Larkspur, CA 94977; 415-945-3232; [www.projectcoyote.org](http://www.projectcoyote.org)

*American Coyote: Still Wild at Heart* is a 30-minute edition of a documentary that debuted in 2007 as the 55-minute DVD release *San Francisco: Still Wild At Heart*, and was later screened at the 2008 United Nations Association Film Festival. A three-minute trailer, *Bernal Hill: Still Wild at Heart*, aired in 2008 at the Bernal Hill Outdoor Cinema.

Videographer Melissa Peabody came to coyotes as her focal subject after editing wildlife programs for Animal Planet, producing educational videos for Stanford University, and a three-year stint with KRON-TV, the San Francisco NBC affiliate.

Coyotes were aggressively exterminated on the San Francisco peninsula for decades while sheep ranching continued along the crests of rolling hills that were considered too steep for urban expansion, but visibly persisted until the sheep industry petered out circa 1970. Though still common farther south and on the west side of the peninsula, coyotes had not been reported in South San Francisco, on the east side, in approximately 30 years when Peabody and others began noticing them in Bernal Hill Park.

"I made the film," Peabody recalls, "because I was so moved by the arrival of this animal."

Primarily nocturnal, coyotes must have reached Bernal Hill by traveling at night. At Bernal Hill Park they found abundant prey, including gophers, rats, and opossum. But soon city residents began reporting coyotes seen in back yards or on streets, foraging for food around dusk. Then came complaints about missing cats and small dogs. Researchers trapped, radio-collared, and then tracked several coyotes. They lived in small packs, not as lone wanderers, indicative of entire families having established themselves before they were discovered. The Bernal Hill coyotes were not distracted by city noise, and stayed near water sources.

They continued moving north, into San Francisco proper, where they colonized Golden Gate Park. There, sadly, animal control officers shot two coyotes because they allegedly threatened humans. The coyotes had apparently been fed by humans, a practice that wildlife experts strongly caution against.

In extremely rare cases, in isolated places,

some wild coyotes have become companions to unique individual humans, but coyotes are not dogs, and should not be socialized to live with humans. Most are, as the film says, still wild at heart.

*American Coyote: Still Wild at Heart* explores a promising experiment in non-lethal predator control underway since 2000 in rural Marin County, California, across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco. Project Coyote founder Camilla Fox explained in the January/February 2008 edition of **ANIMAL PEOPLE** that about 75% of the 10,000 sheep in Marin County are now protected by the use of guard dogs, llamas, and electric fencing. The county shares the cost.

A rancher testifies on camera that his livestock losses are down by 75-80% since he joined the program.

Peabody interviews biologists, ecologists and wildlife researchers to discuss the history and future of coyotes. Since 1930 the U.S. government has subsidized the systematic slaughter of coyotes through aerial gunning, poisoning, and trapping. Hunters shoot them for sport. Human development and population growth have displaced coyotes from much of their former wild habitat in the west and southwest.

Yet the extirpation of wolves, foxes, and other predators from most of the U.S. in the early to mid-20th century enabled coyotes to expand their range from coast to coast by 1948. Within another decade studies had established that no matter how many coyotes are removed from any habitat that will support them, the survivors will raise larger litters to rapidly occupy the carrying capacity.

Coyotes are intelligent, so they adapt to the environment changing around them. Eventually they learned that cities offer food and cover, where they may have to dodge cars but not aerial gunnery. Now coyotes thrive in the Chicago greenbelt, Central Park in New York City, and one was even found riding a light rail vehicle in Portland, Oregon.

Recommended for wildlife enthusiasts, animal control officers, biology students, and ecologists, *American Coyote: Still Wild at Heart* creates appreciation, awareness and respect for coyotes and the challenges they face in the modern world. —Debra J. White

## Pets 'N' Us by **Purnima L. Toolsidass** in consultation with **Debasis Chakrabarti**

Allied Publishers ([www.alliedpublishers.com](http://www.alliedpublishers.com)), 2008. 264 pages, paperback.

"The purpose of *Pets 'N' Us*," author Purnima L. Toolsidass told **ANIMAL PEOPLE**, "is to make people who have pets—or plan to get one—more sensitive to their needs, and more conscious of their responsibilities. I wanted people to think of using pets as a therapy for helping stressed children or unhappy adults. I wanted them to know that pets can be fun and be a great source of comfort. I read out every point to Debasis Chakrabarti, since he is an animal psychologist and an expert on dogs."

*Pets 'N' Us* would be much improved by the addition of a comprehensive index. Most of the advice offered by Toolsidass and Chakrabarti will be familiar to people in places where dogs and cats have long been kept as indoor pets—but in India, where the numbers of pet dogs are just approaching the numbers of street dogs and most cats are semi-feral, much about pet-keeping is still poorly understood. Some points of discussion, such as how to sort out the relationships among pets and servants, may not be found in pet care manuals from any other part of the world.

Chakrabarti founded the Compassionate Crusaders Trust in Kolkata in 1993. Toolsidass became one of his first volunteers. In 1994, at request of People for Animals founder Maneka Gandhi, they assumed management of the Kolkata PFA chapter. Effective at the beginning of 2009, Chakrabarti continues to head the Compassionate Crusaders Trust, focusing on helping wildlife, working animals, and livestock, but has resigned from PFA-Kolkata; Toolsidass heads PFA-Kolkata, focusing on managing the Kolkata Animal Birth Control program, but has resigned from the Compassionate Crusaders Trust. This too was at Mrs. Gandhi's request, after she conflicted with Chakrabarti about seeking matching funding for the ABC program from the Kolkata city government.

Despite rumors of a bitter split, and financial stress afflicting both charities, Toolsidass and Chakrabarti each spoke warmly and well of the other in e-mails about *Pets 'N' Us*.

—Merritt Clifton

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OBITUARIES

**Tony Gregory**, 61, longtime vice president of the Irish Council Against Blood Sports and member of the Dail, the Irish parliament, since 1982, died on January 2, 2009. Gregory was also a member of the Dublin city council, 1979-2004. Recalled ICAB president Philip Kiernan, “In 1993, he courageously brought a private member’s bill to outlaw hare coursing. Sadly, only sixteen [other members] supported it, some of whom defied their party whip to do so. Tony informed himself very well on the issues, observing hare coursing, fox hunting, and carted deer hunts first hand. Once coming across a badger sett illegally blocked by a foxhunt club, he rowed in and helped to unblock the sett, going on to face down the hunt and remonstrate with them.”

**Jean Marie Hodgdon Keene**, 85, died on January 13, 2009 at her home in Homer, Alaska. A horse trainer and trick rider in her youth, she joined the traveling Red River Rodeo in 1952, and was booked to ride in Madison Square Garden, but fell and was dragged by a horse at the Olympia Area in Detroit. Her riding career ended, she hauled cattle, bred and groomed dogs, and ran a truck stop before becoming a fish processor in Homer in 1977. Already feeding other birds, Keene soon began giving fish scraps and road-kill to bald eagles, eventually attracting more than 200 and at times as many as 500 to Homer Spit. The eagle congregation became both a

tourist attraction and a local nuisance. The Homer city council in 2006 banned feeding eagles within city limits, but allowed Keene to continue until April 2010, and in January 2009 allowed her former helper Steve Tarola to continue the eagle feedings until March 27, 2009.

**Jean A. MacKenzie**, 86, died on July 4, 2008 in Vancouver. An ambulance driver in World War II, MacKenzie later served in the Woman’s Royal Canadian Naval Service. An avid rider in her youth, MacKenzie after the war became a nationally noted dog trainer in Trail, British Columbia, but refocused on equestrian training about a decade later after relocating to first Duncan and then Vancouver, winning a bronze metal in team dressage at the Pan American Games in Winnipeg in 1972. She also served as first female president of the Southlands Riding & Polo Club in Vancouver. “In later years she became a passionate vegan. Her home was often a sanctuary for orphaned or injured wildlife, and she strongly supported charities relating to nature conservation and animal rights,” recalled the *Toronto Globe & Mail*.

**Secoomar Brijmohan**, 63, a gardener in Hilton, KwaZulu-Natal, was killed circa January 7, 2009, when he ate a poisoned banana that he thought his employer had left on a table for him. It had actually been left as part of an illegal attempt to kill monkeys

AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRE VICTIMS

**Chris Towie**, M.D. 53, was killed by bushfire on his land at Reedy Creek, near Broadford, Australia, on February 7, 2009. “It is believed he was trying to save his animals,” reported the *Melbourne Herald-Sun*. Partially deaf, Towie was known for confronting bureaucracy on behalf of immigrants, the disabled, and the disadvantaged, and for demanding that more be done to fight methadrine addiction. Animals were also among his priorities. “Every animal he found he took home,” Broadmeadows medical clinic manager Cheryl Ferguson told Carol Nader of the *Melbourne Age*. The animals whom Towie died defending reportedly included several camels, emus, horses, a pony, five dogs, and many birds.

**Marcel Smits**, 56, was killed by bushfire at St. Andrews, Australia, on February 7, 2009. “Smits was the president of the Victoria Cat Protection Society,” recalled former Royal SPCA of Australia president Hugh Wirth. “He was husband of Carole Webb, a Royal SPCA Victoria board member.” Webb and their children were safely away from the fire scene. Smits headed the Z Transport Group, and was active in the Motorcycle Riders Association of Victoria.

**Angela Brunton**, a prominent Australian artist believed to be in her seventies, who featured portraits of kangaroos in her last exhibit, was killed by bushfire on February 7, 2009 with her longtime partner Reg Evans, 80, an actor, at their farm near St. Andrews. An heirloom cradle made by Evans in 1972, used by more than 100 local children since, whose names are inscribed in a registry in St. Andrews, survived the fire because the family currently using it took it to Canberra.

**Melanie and Penny Chambers**, 22 and 21, were killed on February 7, 2009 while trying to save horses at their mother’s property near Kingslake, Australia.

**John Barnett**, reportedly in his sixties, was killed with his wife Jenny Barnett in their car on February 7, 2009 as they tried to outrace a wall of fire near Steels Creek, Australia. A University of Melbourne endocrinologist, Barnett was principal research fellow for the Animal Welfare Science Centre on the university campus, was a scientific advisory panelist for the World Society for the Protection of Animals, and had for about 15 years been active in the International Society for Applied Ethology. Barnett also managed the animal welfare program for the Australian Poultry Cooperative Research Centre and chaired a Victorian government Animal Ethics Committee for wildlife and small institutions, recalled an ISAE memorial. Before joining the University of Melbourne, Barnett spent 30 years with the Australian Department of Primary Industries.

**Jenny Barnett**, reportedly in her sixties, was killed with her husband John Barnett in their car on February 7, 2009 as they tried to outrace a wall of fire near Steels Creek, Australia. A field biologist, Barnett joined the Mammal Survey Group of Victoria in the 1960s. She later worked for the Victorian Environment Centre, the Wilderness Society, and the Victoria National Parks Association. For the latter, Jenny Barnett extensively documented the effects on wildlife of the Victoria bushfires of 2003—a devastating prelude to the fires of 2009. Best known for leading campaigns on behalf of protecting wildlife habitat, Jenny Barnett was also remembered by longtime friend Irene Baker for “often having a pouch with a rescued baby ringtailed possum or such-like.” In 2005 Jenny Barnett criticized the Victoria Department of Sustainability & Environment for issuing more than 5,000 permits to kill animals of 65 species in only two years. She argued that the department should focus on educating the public to learn to live with wildlife.

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ANIMAL OBITS

**Yellowstone National Park Bull Elk Number 6**, age 15-plus, longtime dominant bull of the Mammoth Hot Springs herd, suffocated from his own weight circa February 7, 2009 after tripping over a wire fence behind the Super 8 motel in Gardiner, Montana, just north of the park. A 725-pounder, “Number Six was famous for venting his sexual frustration on rival bull elk and cars,” recalled Associated Press writer Mead Gruver. “He was responsible for many thousands of dollars in damage to tourists’ cars over the years.” Twice he attacked humans, and was de-antlered in 2004 and 2005 to make him less dangerous, but he retained his status against perennial challenger Number 10.

**Mohanan**, 47, resident elephant at the Sree Parathasarathy Temple at Aranmula, Kerala, India, died on February 8, 2009, two days after his last parade. Pressured by local witnesses who briefly blocked the Chengannur-Kozhencherry State Highway to demand a prosecution, the Kerala Forest Department has reportedly brought charges against two mahouts and a former mahout for allegedly severely beating Mohanan after he collapsed due to possible heat exhaustion.

MEMORIALS



For Patrice in memory of Puntito: It is your love that gave Punto a glorious life that few ever know; it is your strong will, absolutely refusing to let her go, that kept her thriving years after the vets had given up; and it was in your arms that she left this earth, the only way that she would have wanted to depart. Perhaps Emily Dickinson was right in believing that genuine love is a form of immortality, and Punto forever has the most secure of homes in the warmth of your generous heart.

—Ed Duvin



In memory of Patrice Greanville's Sombra, whom I captured as a feral kitten in 1991. She gave me quite a swipe with her paw, which she probably thought was well-deserved. I'm grateful to Patrice for adopting her and giving her a good life. Like many ferals who never tame up, she enjoyed the company of the other cats in his household, even though she never expressed any gratitude to Patrice—who loved her in spite of it.

—Kim Bartlett

In memory of Toby, much loved and missed cat companion to Linda Piee.

—Geri Rennhack

In memory of Sheba.

—Doris Bigwood



**Vikramaditya, handler Swathi Buddhiraju, & child at the Lebenshelf school for the mentally handicapped in Visakhapatnam, in Vicky's October 12, 2004 debut as Dr. Paw. (VSPCA)**

**Vikramaditya**, usually called Vicky, age about 18, died on January 25, 2009 at the home of Visakha SPCA co-founders Pradeep Kumar Nath, Mallika Buddhiraju, and Saradha Buddhiraju. Captured in 1999 by city workers and taken home from the VSPCA shelter in 2002 by Swathi Buddhiraju, the fourth cofounder, Vicky in 2004 debuted as the first “Dr. Paw” in a combination humane education and pet therapy program modeled after the “Dr. Dog” programs developed in China, Vietnam, and the Philippines by the Animals Asia Foundation. Like “Dr. Dog,” “Dr. Paw” quickly caught on. Similar programs are now underway throughout India.

**Angel**, a dugong seen days earlier by Andaman Islanders with a calf, was found dead on Neil Island in late December 2008, apparently killed “to be used as bait for fishing,” reported Kartick Satyanarayan of Wildlife SOS.

**Siloni**, the first captive hoolock gibbon to be returned to the wild in India, was found dead on January 12, 2009 in the Panbari forest, near Kaziranga National Park, Assam. “Meningitis could be the cause of her death,” said Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation & Conservation veterinarian Prasanta Boro, after conducting a necropsy at the College of Veterinary Sciences in Guwahati. The CWRC, a joint project of the Assam Forest Department and the Wildlife Trust of India, bought Siloni from a temple priest in 2003, when she was about one year old, and returned her to the forest on May 25, 2008.

**Mary**, 30, an emu long resident at the Alexander Park Zoo in Bundaberg, Australia, was found stabbed to death on December 23, 2008. Patrick James Andrews, 23, and Glenn Robert Lavelle, 26, have been charged with the killing.

**Travis**, 14, a chimpanzee kept by Sandra Herold, 70, of Stamford, Connecticut, was shot by Stamford police on February 16, 2009, after he mauled Charla Nash, 55, and attacked a police officer who was inside a car. The incident began, said CNN, when Travis used a key to escape from his cage. Herold called Nash to help her get him back into the cage. Travis inflicted reportedly life-threatening bites to Nash’s face, neck, and hands. Herold called the police between stabbing Travis with a butcher knife and hitting him with a shovel to try to save Nash. Travis had escaped once before, rampaging through Stamford for several hours in 2003.



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